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The Times Literary Supplement

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Cover picture

Woodcut on the title-page of the first edition (1642) of an anonymous pamphlet by John Taylor (the Water Poet) entitled in full *The Devil turn'd Round-Head: or, Pluto become a Brownist. Being a just comparison, how the Devil is become a Round-Head? In what manner, and how zealously (like them) he is affected with the moving of the Spirit. With the holy Sisters desire of Copulation (if he would seem Holy, Sincere, and Pure) were it with the Devil himself. As also, the Amsterdamian definition of a Familist. A copy is offered in Sotheby's sale of the collection of the late Lionel Robinson on June 26 and 27 in their Grosvenor Salon, Bloomfield Place, New Bond Street, London W1.*

The other Irans

Fred Halliday

ROY MOTTAHEDEH
The Mantle of the Prophet: Learning and power in modern Iran
416pp. Chatto and Windus. £12.95.
0701130350
DONNÉ RAFFAT
The Prison Papers of Bozorg Alavi: A literary odyssey
246pp. Syracuse University Press; distributed in the UK by Pnrost and Brandt. \$28.
0815601956
HALEH AFSHAR
Iran: A revolution in turmoil
262pp. Macmillan £25. (paperback, £8.95).
0333369467
BARRY M. ROSEN (Editor)
Iran Since the Revolution: Internal dynamics, regional conflict, and the Superpowers
187pp. New York: Columbia University Press. \$20.
080339759
ROBIN WRIGHT
Sacred Rage: The crusade of modern Islam
315pp. Deutsch. £10.95.
0233978836
I. P. PETRUSHEVSKY
Islam in Iran
400pp. Athlone. £32.
0485112574

Iran is a country with three faces, three aspects at once cultural and political that appear with varying degrees of prominence and precision. Their shifting profiles as perceived abroad reflect deep and as yet unresolved conflicts within this large and complex land. In the case of a country it is even more misleading than it is in the case of an individual to presume that there is one "true" object. There is no genuine, "authentic" nation embodying traditions and national values and protecting them against alien distortions. Such distortions there may be, products of colonial rule or modern cultural hegemonies. But even within the country cultures, regions and social forces compete with each other; and external influences may in any case be beneficial and enriching. That each competing force tries to discredit the other by labelling it as the product of outside forces and itself as the true "national" representative is part of the battle, but not a key to an understanding of it.

Iran has never been colonized and, like China and Ethiopia, it embodies one of the older and more continuous cultural traditions of the Third World. But the face that it presented to the outside world for some decades up to 1979 was that of assertive modernity. Whether in the White Revolution of the Shah, a bombastic but not wholly ineffective endeavour, or in the liberal nationalism of Dr Mossadeq in the early 1950s, or in the voices of the Iranian left, inheritors of the oldest socialist tradition in Asia, Iran appeared to be a country that wished to learn from the industrialized West in order to preserve its independence.

Against this modernity, which in all its variations was secular, there emerged the second face, that of the turbaned and bearded Ayatollah Khomeini, scowling across the bowed backs of his supporters and rejecting, as no successful revolutionary since the eighteenth century has done, ideas of democracy, equality and material progress. Islam was "in danger", as he put it, and he was going to restore it. Khomeini proclaimed, and many inside and outside Iran appear to have believed him, that he represented the true Iran, one obscured by the Shah and his fawning courtiers and by years of indirect but oppressive foreign domination. It was not the Iran of modern north Tehran but the Iran of the southern Tehran slums, of long isolated provincial towns around the rim of the central desert, and, above all, of the "true" Islam.

Between these two images, and sceptical of both, there is a third Iran, one that has not been in power, but which reflects the values of many of its people. It is Islamic, in the sense of accepting the main articles of the Muslim faith and being influenced by its texts. But it is not particularly clerical, and has a deep distrust, often expressed in the form of ribald anecdotes, about what mullahs are really like. Its cultural points of reference are not so much the

holy texts of the seventh century so beloved of Khomeini, as the Persian poets Hafez, Saadi, Mowlavi, Ferdousi, Khayyam and others, whose elaborate and elliptical verses provide a large reservoir of wisdom and quotation for educated Iranians. It is prepared to laugh at rulers in their crowned or turbaned form, but it is also adept at dissimulation as an essential way of surviving. One day someone will publish the current Iranian Khomaii jokes and anecdotes: they will tell a very different story from that told by the bearded militants so dominant today.

It is one of the great virtues of Roy Mottahedeh's *The Mantle of the Prophet* that it tries to convey the rich and interwoven pattern of Iranian cultural life as distinct from the clamour and immediacy of the revolution and its aftermath. This is a discursive work, combining discussion of the writings of modern Ira-

seminaries as to its shrines.

In the course of his explorations, Mottahedeh takes us through many of the areas of Iranian culture that the modern face obscured. He has a sharp feeling for the sensuous aspects of the traditional Iranian town - the texture of bricks and tiles, the movement of breezes, the sounds of the side alley, the precious burst of greenery and of trees. He takes us inside the Iranian home, which is itself inward-looking, focusing on the courtyard. He is equally good at picking out the details of life in the modern city that young migrants from the provinces would have remarked on, details - such as the cinema hawardings of fantasy and passion - which would have both bemused and antagonized them. His is very much the Iran of the third face, a confident and ironic view founded on a long literary tradition, that tries to explain the other two faces to the outside world, to

quoted by Mottahedeh, which praises the pre-Islamic and specifically Iranian Zoroaster as a prophet who "never killed and never ordered anyone to be killed". *The Mantle of the Prophet* ends with the fear that the Islamic tradition of the *madreses* and the learned will itself be threatened as the Islamic Republic develops.

Mottahedeh's study is erudite, lucid and engaging; it builds a delicately crafted bridge between Iranian cultures and the Western world. And it is here that some problems arise. It is all too sanitized, too *rahar*, as the Persians say, too calm. It is not only a matter of schools and theological interpretations, of sensitive observers and nuances. The book fails to convey the coarseness, the vulgarity, the harsh authoritarianism that have marked Khomeini's rule and approach. We do not hear the Ayatollah saying he should have put a gallows on every street corner the moment he returned to the country. We do not read about the traditional involvement of the clergy in the profitable business of *sighe*, temporary marriage, a form of religiously sanctioned prostitution. The baneful dogmatism of the clerical mind is screened by an, at times, indulgent interest in its vagaries. The bigotry towards modern ideas, women, Jews and the Bahai faith is smoothed away too easily. There is too little here to offend the well-disposed American East Coast reader. Given that this is a book about Iranian culture, there is also too little humour: James Manier's early nineteenth-century picaresque novel, *The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Isfahan* captures more of Iranian thinking, with its fantastic exaggerations and bombast, precisely because it gives greater scope to this dimension. The tall story is as central to Iran as the cult of Shi'ite martyrdom.

Mottahedeh does portray the variety of Iranian cultures, secular and religious, and some of his most interesting pages are about writers such as Ali Ahmad, an overrated exponent of cultural nationalism, and Kasravi, the most committed anti-clerical writer, as well as about divisions within the clergy. But the focus is still a little too restricted. There is almost no recognition of the degree to which the Persian is but one strand within Iran - half the population do not have Persian as their first language, and it has been one of the gongs of all modern rulers, Shah and Ayatollah alike, to impose a false uniformity on this multinational country. We hear almost nothing about its women. Their entry into, and later expulsion from, education has been one of the more dramatic themes in modern history. Furuk Faroukhzad's poems portray on anger and passion of universal relevance: we could have heard more about people like her. In the discussion of the modern sector and its mores, there is not enough about the specific institutions through which the Shah established his authority: the army, the main support of the modern state, hardly appears at all.

A very different, more individualistic, portrait of Iran is provided in Donné Raffat's study of the novelist Bozorg Alavi, a communist who was imprisoned in the late 1930s with a group of other Marxist intellectuals and who has lived in exile in East Germany since the 1950s. The core of Raffat's book is a set of five short stories written by Alavi around the themes of his imprisonment - his relations with other prisoners, the humiliations by warders, the dreams of escape. Around these stories Raffat has written a literary travelogue, describing his visits to Alavi, their discussions about Iranian literature, and in particular Alavi's relation to Sadegh Hedayat, author of *The Blind Owl*, buried in the Père Lachaise cemetery in Paris after his suicide in 1951.

Raffat's story ends on an uncertain note, with Alavi returning to Iran on two occasions after the revolution to receive widespread acclaim from a new generation of Iranian writers, those who had grown up after the 1953 coup and who had experienced prison and exile in the 1960s and 1970s. Alavi expresses the hope that, while continuing to live in Berlin, he will be able to return to his friends in Iran for one month every year: but it was not to be. Within two years of his victory in 1979, Khomeini turned against his liberal and left opponents and consigned the opposition intelligentsia to a new, even tougher, round of suppression and exile. Some, such as the playwright Sâid Sultânpur, were shot in prison. Others, like the novelist Gholamhussein

Freya Stark's photograph of the Shi'ite Shrine of Korbala, in Iraq. It is taken from *Traveller Through Time: A photographic journey with Freya Stark*, by Malise Ruthven, which will be reviewed in a future issue of the TLS.

nian political and novelists, with summaries of Iranian history and the reconstruction of symptomatic biographies. The central figure is a mildly fictionalized cleric, Ali Hashemi, now in his late thirties, and Mottahedeh traces his childhood and education in the holy city of Qom, through the *madreses* or religious school, to the confusions and challenges of recent Iranian history.

Mottahedeh - Professor of Medieval Middle Eastern History at Princeton - is, above all, concerned with the issue of education and of the clash between the traditional religious schooling, with its study of grammar, rhetoric and logic, and the "new education" introduced by the state, on Western models, in the twentieth century. At times the book appears to suffer from what one might term scholasticism, the idea that the history of a country can be written through a study of its educational processes. But in his final pages Mottahedeh criticizes this very temptation, and his earlier analyses rest upon a justified belief that education and the transmission of a religious tradition through it formed an essential part of established clerical power. Khomeini himself made his reputation and trained his followers through his work as a teacher in Qom: the cadre of Khomeini's revolution were his *talabeh*, his religious students. The influence of Qom in Iran has been as much due to its

take a western reader into the mind-set of those who won and those who lost in the Iranian revolution.

Two central issues recur in his story. One is the growth and triumph within Islamic thinking of a radical political approach - radical in its critique of existing society and government, and political in its insistence that it is possible for Muslims to fight for an Islamic government on this earth and in this day. Khomeini emerges as the culmination of a long tradition of interpretation and *ijtihad*, or individual judgment, by the learned mullahs, through which he produced his theory of Islamic government. It was this theory that provided a goal for the revolution of 1978-9 and which has legitimated the régime that the Ayatollah has since built.

The other issue is that of social change in Iran itself. In the 1970s an explosive set of conditions prevailed: urban migrants, as in the Britain of the industrial revolution, became more assertively religious in Iranian cities; religion provided values and organization in a new and hostile environment and the result was the mass mobilization which toppled the Shah.

Khomeini's victory marked the combination of a new theory and a new social context. Yet, as Mottahedeh implies, Khomeini's victory is less absolute than it may appear. The third face survives, epitomized in the recent poem

Saeedi, died in exile. Many remain in Iran trapped or determined on staying, their solaces the traditional ones of despair, nihilism, dissimulation and patience. Their voices are, for the moment, silent: their belief, pioneered by Alevis, and Hedayat, that Iranian literary culture can be fused creatively and critically with that of the West, finds no favour with Khomeini, who wants to stamp on both cultures, in the name of a new harem orthodoxy. He has banned most music, and denounced secular writing. The angry cultural nationalism of Ali Ahmed, who influenced so many Iranians in the 1960s and 1970s, has been used by Khomeini himself to legitimize the destruction not only of what are seen as external cultural influences but also of the indigenous culture of the third face. The Ayatollah's cultural revolution, like that of Mao, has destroyed much of his own country's literary and artistic life. A sardonic evocation of Khomeini's impact on the intelligentsia can be found in the Esmail Fassihi's recently translated novel, *Forays in a Canal*.

If it is simplistic to see Khomeini's victory as the triumph of some "genuine" Iran over alien forces, it is also mistaken to assume that the régime itself is unstable and unable to maintain its power in the longer run. Ever since Khomeini came to power it has been fashionable to predict that his state cannot last more than a few months, for reasons which range from internal opposition, to the war with Iraq, to economic difficulties. Iranians like to tell the story of the man from Mars who arrives in Tehran in 200 years' time to be greeted by excited citizens who say that the mullahs will be out "in two months' time". The anti-Khomeini opposition has never been as weak as it is today, and despite economic problems the Islamic Republic still has great reserves of support, and economic potential on which to draw.

The outstanding study of post-revolutionary Iran is Shaul Bakshi's *The Reign of the Ayatollahs* (reviewed in the TLS on March 21), but Iran: *A revolution in turmoil*, edited by

Haleh Afshar, and *Iran Since the Revolution*, edited by Barry Rosen, highlight some important dimensions of recent social and political history. Afshar's book reprints the brilliant and prophetic essay by Ervand Abrahamian, first published in *Past and Present*, on the crowd in modern Iranian history, in which he tries, following Rudé, to decipher the origins and intent of those perceived by others as a mob. He underlines the enduring importance of traditional religious and financial institutions in the bazaar, as a focus for organizing opposition to the State. He also recalls the strength of secular and communist forces in the 1940s and 1950s – something else that Khomeini would like us to forget. *Iran: A revolution in turmoil* also contains a further essay by Abrahamian, on the social origins of guerrillas who resisted the Shah in the 1970s, as well as good studies of economic development by Mohammad Pessaran and of post-revolutionary petroleum policy by Fereidoun Fesharaki. Afshar herself contributes an illuminating chapter on the Iranian army. The book is perhaps less convincing in some of the bolder assertions of how near the régime is to collapse, and is marred by some careless errors of detail – a billion is not one hundred million, on either side of the Atlantic, the revolution occurred not in 1977 but 1979, and the President's name is Ali Khamenei rather than Ali Mousavi.

Rosen, a former Peace Corps worker in Iran, and later a diplomat who was one of the American hostages, covers both the development of the Islamic revolution and its international relations. There is little in *Iran Since the Revolution* to justify the promise of "internal dynamics" contained in the subtitle but there are three excellent essays, by Shahrrooz Akhavi, Nikki Keddie and Mangol Bayat on the ideological aspects of the revolution and how Khomeini's particular version of Shi'ism emerged. The studies of foreign relations cover Iran's dealings with Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Israel, America and Russia: the Iranian revolution,

like all others, has tried to encourage similar upheavals abroad, and has prompted militancy even where its own direct influence has not reached. Yet after an initial indiscriminate enthusiasm, its direct "export" of military support is now restricted to three countries – Iraq, Afghanistan and Lebanon. Only in Iraq does it seem to have much chance of success. Both America and Russia would like to curb the international effects of Iranian policy, but if the alternative were uncertainty within Iran and with the prospect of an East-West confrontation, then both would prefer the present régime to survive. It was after all in Iran, in the Azerbaijan crisis of March 1946, that the first Cold War began.

One issue that cannot be resolved so easily is that associated with the debate on "terrorism", an issue of importance itself, though rather inflated in recent coverage, and the subject of much selective indignation by governments which are themselves involved in promoting similar activities. Robin Wright, an American journalist who has worked for some years for *The Sunday Times*, has produced a broad survey of the different forces and groups in the Middle East that are encouraging armed activities in the name of Islam. Lebanon is the source of many of the people and guns, but, as she points out, the use of unorthodox armed elements has been part of government policy in the region for quite some time. She has some sensible things to say about the dangers of over-simplification of the problem, particularly on the part of Western governments. The strategic considerations discussed in Rosen's volume bear not a little on the ways in which Western governments have responded to, and distorted, this question. The term "terrorism" is now used to discredit guerrilla or armed action by any group with which the speaker disagrees.

All these books end with uncertainty – about the fate of Khomeini's new order, about the impact of Iran on the Middle East as a whole, about the outcome of the war with Iraq, about the ways in which Khomeini's apparent success in ousting the Shah will effect the evolution of Islam, about how the three faces of Iran will in the longer run interact. Khomeini's face has certainly replaced that of the Shah. He has "smashed the idol" of monarchy, to use the idiom of the Imam himself. He is determined to smash the idol of Saddam Hussein too, and on present form stands a good chance of doing so. But he has only been able to do so by making a sort of peace with the representatives of the other faces. There are middle-class Iranians who have survived and prospered in the new republic, making substantial profits from an economically inexperienced and beleaguered government, consuming vodka behind the walls of their houses as the Revolutionary Guards patrol outside, and travelling abroad to a tolerable degree, if not as often as they did in the days of the Shah. The radicals within the régime who want to nationalize land and foreign trade have, to date, been blocked. The vigilantes have fixed on essentials, like the stray hairs of women, but have done remarkably little to alter economic and social conditions in the country. It may be that the exigencies of the war will force the mullahs to take more drastic measures in order to mobilize

domestic resources and labour: but to do so will involve making mere enemies, something the Ayatollah, as much a master of compromise as he is of cruelty, may be reluctant to do.

It would be as mistaken to see the recent history of Iran as something entirely new as it is to see it as just another replay of forms of protest and Islamic teaching long present in Iranian history. The degree to which Iranian politics reflect traditional Shi'ite values and myths should be recognized, but should not be taken as a full explanation. That a revolution of this kind succeeded and stayed in power in the last quarter of the twentieth century, in a country that is over 50 per cent urbanized, and which relies so much on its place in the international market, is something novel and important. So too is the particular interpretation of Islam's political and social import given by Khomeini. As the Soviet scholar I. P. Petrushevsky argues in *Islam in Iran*, Islam in general and Shi'ism in particular have changed with time, and in response to social and international conditions which themselves mark religious thinking and determine its impact. Iran has been Islamic since the seventh century – a result of an abrupt foreign imposition that was, so the evidence suggests, widely welcomed by the Iranian population who wanted to get rid of the Zoroastrian priests and other oppressors. So much for "authentic" national values. But Shi'ism has been dominant in Iran only since 1500, when, as a result of a deliberate act of state policy, as assertive as that of Henry VIII, the Safavids decided to invest Iran with a distinctive religious character in order to separate it from the influence, and political claims, of the Ottoman and Arab Sunnis to the west.

The legacy of that decision remains with us today, but in that uncertain form already suggested. If Shi'ism becomes the religion of a country it can, as Petrushevsky and some of the other writers in these volumes suggest, be appropriated either by the rulers or by the ruled. If the former, then there is, as Motabede's Ali Hashemi fears, a danger that the religious tradition will be rejected by the population. More broadly, an Iran that set out to distinguish itself in religion, as it has always been distinct in language, from the Arab world and from the Turks, might find itself in long-running conflict with that world, incapable of dominating it or finding a stable relationship with it. Its distinctive religious character serves a national purpose but also limits its appeal. Khomeini may claim to be the "Imam of the Islamic Nation" but he is in reality the ruler of Iran. Despite much talk of millennial rivalries between Arabs and Persians, relations between the two have been remarkably unexplored in the past, and it has taken modern nationalism, combined with revolutionary enthusiasm, to turn the frontier between Iran and Iraq into a zone of war. We must accept that, at the moment, the Imam commands widespread support within his country for the war with Iraq. The "idol-smasher" remains in command. But behind the apparently homogeneous intensity of the clerical face, now adorned with the red tulips of martyrdom, there lie other Iranians, seeking deliverance, or revenge, biding their time and quietly contesting the dominion of the turban and the mosque.

This The Pure Essence

This the pure essence, human wickedness,
A blind crustacean scuttling from its van
Between two constables in burberries,
This vicious, stupid, ignorant old man,
Care-taker of a lifetime and a kettle,
Age's sweet fetor and a smoker's cough.
He longs to loll on banks of pink rose petal
With a pretty little boy to suck him off.
Lips that forget to kiss should learn to pray
As man born into joy lives on and grieves.
In a bin-liner beside the motorway
A little boy lies awed in wet leaves,
But not so deep his father cannot find
Him.

Pity for this, pity for humankind.

JOHN WHITWORTH

Evidence of a conspiracy

Philip Windsor

R. W. JOHNSON
Shootdown: The verdict on KAL 007
335pp. Chatto and Windus. £10.95.
0701129832

The case of the Korean airliner destroyed on the verge of leaving Soviet airspace over Sakhalin Island in September 1983 continues to arouse controversy. Competing theories have been put forward: navigational error of one kind or another, Soviet interference, a deliberate corner-cutting exercise by the Korean crew, or, finally, a manipulation of the flight by the Korean and American intelligence agencies and their accomplices in other branches of the United States government. The first two of these theories suggest that the Soviet Union was largely responsible for the disaster, the third suggests only that international civil aviation rules need to be tightened. The fourth forms the basis of R. W. Johnson's *Shootdown: The verdict on KAL 007*; and even though it is careful to leave its readers to draw their own conclusions, it also makes a powerful case for the United States to answer if it is not to stand accused of having, at a high level of government, put the lives of 269 people at risk in order to probe the workings of radar installations deep in the heart of the Soviet Union.

The evidence it adduces works on several levels, and is both positive and negative. To deal with the accident hypothesis first, as it has been discussed both by Murray Sayle in a number of articles and by Alexander Dallin in his *Black Box: KAL 007 and the Superpowers* (reviewed in the TLS of August 23, 1985), it is certainly technically possible for an airliner to stray off course through a combination of mistakes in its "heading modes" and fatigue on the part of the crew. But to stray so far off course and for so long is unprecedented, and though the possibility cannot be ruled out entirely, a detailed examination of what is involved makes it exceedingly unlikely. The positive evidence seems to confirm the improbability. The Korean captain who was planning his eventual flight-path even before take-off, took on extra fuel while officially appearing to take on less, and was thereafter engaged in a systematic deception of both Anchorage and Narita ground-control throughout the flight. It also appears that another Korean airliner was helping him to do so. Certainly, it relayed messages while KAL 007 was refusing to answer calls over a range of transmission frequencies. Equally, a ruse of this nature would help to explain why a calm voice continued to send misleading messages to Narita after what has since been established as the moment of shootdown – until it suddenly reported rapid decompression. At this level of evidence, the accident hypothesis becomes increasingly difficult to sustain in spite of the persuasive arguments put forward by those who advocate it. So does that of the corner-cutting exercise, particularly in view of the discrepancies in the accounts of the fuel taken on board. Shorter flights, by definition, require less fuel; higher manoeuvrability and the possibility of the need to resort to evasion tactics require more.

The third hypothesis, that of Soviet electronic interference, can pretty well be ignored. John Ford once said that all it takes to make a good Western is an ignorance of firearms and an ignorance of horses. Much the same applies to the idea that the Soviet Union – hardly a world leader in most fields of applied electronics – could have produced a device far in advance of American or Japanese technology, which was then used to lure an airliner to its destruction simply because a prominent member of the John Birch Society was on board – and by accident at that. Such a notion represents not so much a conspiracy theory of history as a case of the delusion theories of history which flourish in the richer pastures of the far Right.

But what of the conspiracy theories of the Left? R. W. Johnson extracted some notoriety, shortly after the shoot-down of the airliner, by publishing in the *Guardian* an article which suggested that it was after all possible that it had been diverted and misused by agencies of the United States. The common-sense reaction to this is that events are as often as not the

product of human fallibility rather than conspiracy. But the difference between the two is not categorical. Many disasters are simply conspiracies which went wrong. In this particular case, the evidence must be examined, not in the light of whether one believes that conspiracy theorists are wrong in principle, but in the light of whether it adds up to a more plausible explanation of the disaster than any of the others put forward. Here, there is a strong case to be met; and once again there are different levels of evidence.

Johnson's political analysis is the weakest part of this case. There is nothing to suggest, as he sometimes might be taken to imply, that the KAL flight was misused in order to wreck arms-control negotiations, which were in any case going so badly by that time that there was practically nothing left to wreck. Nor were the consequences of the disaster, in terms of increased tension between the two superpowers, so far-reaching as he says. On the international setting, his arguments are not very convincing, and do not provide positive evidence of anything like a conspiracy. On the other hand, what does emerge about the Reagan White House during the President's first Administration certainly suggests that it was possible for a conspiracy to be mounted at the higher levels of the CIA or the National Security Council or both. The picture is one of cynicism, ignorance and a self-righteous brutality, all held together by the winsome bonhomie of a leader who delegated virtually all his responsibilities, and whose attention-span on a good day was remarkably limited. A year after the event, even the CIA was to admit that neither Soviet ground control nor the Soviet fighter pilots were aware that they were shooting down a civilian airliner. But at the time the Soviet Union was accused by the President himself, by George Shultz at the State Department and by Jeane Kirkpatrick at the United Nations of doing it knowingly and deliberately. It is, to say the least, possible to suggest that they had been kept in the dark by their colleagues. But that is still only a possibility. At the political level, the analysis would merely raise some interesting, potentially explosive, but fundamentally unanswerable questions. The tentative is, however, made more plausible by the analysis of what was going on at the time in the area of the flight.

The advocates of the accident hypothesis have been at pains to point out that there was no need to send an airliner into Soviet airspace in order to activate and read the signals of the Soviet air-defence system. Military aircraft are coastally "licking" this system and ships and satellites are picking up the signals. But this argument can be reversed. The information acquired by such methods is limited. And if it just so happens that an off-course airliner activates defence systems deeper into Soviet territory than any military mission could hope to risk doing at the very time when (as the accident advocates point out) American reconnaissance surveillance and jamming in the whole area of the Sea of Japan were exceptionally active, there is at least a *prima facie* case to consider. Further, if the CIA does admit that the Soviet authorities had no means of knowing what they were shooting down, even though they were all aware of the presence of an intruder from the time it entered Soviet air space before it crossed Kamchatka, it is difficult to believe in prolonged incompetence on the Russians' part as the only explanation for the time they took to track and destroy a target in such a sensitive area. Jamming might offer a better explanation, especially if coupled (as might be the case) with the deception tactics of an American military aircraft at a crucial moment.

Suspensions of this nature are reinforced by the last level of analysis, which can be put in the form of a question: was there an American cover-up? Here there is the issue of the discrepancies between the accounts of the American and Japanese ground stations. The Japanese gradually fell into line with many (though not all) aspects of the American version. Among the more important discrepancies was the fact that the United States indicated that the airliner took a full twelve minutes to crash after it had been shot at, while the original Japanese version indicated that it was disintegrating and plummeting. The significant point here, of course, is that the two different

versions would have meant entirely different search-areas – and it appears that American vessels were sent to the right one very fast and in great secrecy, while the Japanese were not at first allowed to join in. The suspicions which lurk behind such a pattern of events point to two further considerations. One is that for several hours, the United States government put out a story that the airliner had been forced to land on Sakhalin, but that it was safe. Since this must have been known to be untrue, one wonders whether it was meant to provide time both for news presentation and for the organization of a search mission in the right place. Another is that the United States authorities have always been extremely eager about whether they ever found the "black box" of the airliner. What is clear is that they constantly put out misinformation about its flight path, and also prepared a discrediting story in case the Russians came up with any evidence that it had indeed been probing Soviet air defences.

These are the essentials of R. W. Johnson's case. It arises from a masterly analysis of the alternative hypotheses and of the evidence available. Even in its rather weak political context it is possible to suggest that very highly placed people within the United States government were making illicit use of the KAL 007 flight and were doing so through a series of links between Korean Airlines, the Korean CIA and the CIA itself. Since the United States was particularly interested in the phased-array radar station the Russians were building at Krasnoyarsk at the time (something which clearly broke the terms of the SALT agreements by virtue of its location, though not necessarily by what it was meant for) it could be argued that the United States needed to know whether a sinister intent was attached, or whether the Soviet Union was merely saving a bit of money by cheating in secret. *Pace* Mr Johnson, this could even indicate that at least some elements in the United States government were still taking the arms-control negotiations seriously while others were writing

them off. But whatever the motive, the hypothesis of a deliberate probing mission – not surveillance – and of an elaborate cover-up after the tragedy fits the known facts better than any other. The United States radar tapes of the aircraft's course and activities might well have provided firm evidence one way or the other, but it appears that these were wiped within a very short time of their being handed over by the National Transport Safety Board to the United States Air Force (via the State Department). Perhaps that explains why, contrary to American law, the Board never held an inquiry into the crash of an aircraft carrying American citizens and of which the flight originated in American territory.

None of this, of course, excuses the Soviet action in shooting down an unidentified aircraft, let alone Marshal Orgakov's cheerful brutality in explaining it afterwards. But it does go some way to account for the fury of the Soviet reaction to the American propaganda (and intelligence?) coup. Nobody can argue from the negative to the positive, and declare that just because so many things look so very odd a historical conspiracy was indeed footed. But the least one can say is that R. W. Johnson's hypothesis holds water better than most; and until an official American inquiry sets out to answer the questions raised by his powerful and disturbing book, the *bien-pensants* among British journalists and academics should really cease to cling to their belief that the "openness" of American society implies that it has an open government.

Among the entries in *Future War Novels: An annotated bibliography of works in English published since 1946* by John Newman and Michael Unsworth (101pp. Oryx Press; distributed by Clio Press, 55 St Thomas' Street, Oxford. £25) are Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (Doubleday, 1968), Daniel F. Galouye's *Dark Universe* (Bentley, 1961) and Angus Wilson's *The Old Man at the Zoo* (Secker and Warburg, 1961).

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Revolution baptized

Brendan Bradshaw

DERMOT KEOGH
The Vatican, the Bishops and Irish Politics
1919-39
304pp. Cinnhridge University Press. £27.50.
0521 301297

Recent European surveys of values and attitudes highlight a continuing Irish addiction to religion, to which, according to the statistics, they are "much more inclined" – as one analyst of them expresses it – than any other nationality within the European Economic Community. Part of the explanation for this, in human terms, is the fact that the Catholic Church in Ireland from the early nineteenth century onwards became associated with the forces working to change the social and political order, while elsewhere in Europe it came to be regarded as a bastion of social and political conservatism. Dermot Keogh's study, *The Vatican, the Bishops and Irish Politics 1919-39*, is concerned with what might be regarded as the most remarkable coup of the Irish Church in this regard, its "baptism" of the movement of revolutionary nationalism in the latter's hour of triumph, between 1919, when the revolutionaries captured the overwhelming support of the electorate, and 1939, when the ideology of the revolution was enshrined in the Valera constitution. The Imperialist certificate, in a manner of speaking, was a change of the constitution – deleted by referendum in the 1970s – which recognized the "special position" of the Catholic Church, in virtue of the religious affiliation of the great majority of the Irish people.

The involvement of the Catholic Church in the political history of modern Ireland has been subjected to rather sophisticated analysis over the past two decades. Two American scholars, Emmet Larkin and David Miller, have developed a Weberian-style explanatory framework, seeking to expound the Church's role in terms of a power-sharing arrangement

with the politicians in an emerging nation state. J. H. Whyte, the Professor of Political Science at University College Dublin, has illuminated the scene from a different perspective by analysing the history of Church and State since independence in the context of contemporary European intellectual and ideological currents. Keogh's contribution is partly in providing new documentary evidence, notably from the Irish College at Rome; it is, however, no less a matter of adopting a straightforward narrative approach. His account concentrates upon personalities, events and contingent circumstances rather than upon the workings of ineluctable processes or upon movements of thought. The result is to emphasize the complexity and ambiguity of the concrete historical situation, which the more schematized analyses tended to obscure.

Keogh's major achievement is to dispel the impression of the Church as a monolith – his own word – that is, an institution possessed of total unity of purpose and of action. In his narrative the monolith dissolves into three interest-groups of higher clergy: a group of Curial officials around the Pope; the Irish bench of bishops and other influential Irish churchmen; a group representing the English interest at Rome, led by the feline Cardinal Gasquet. Internal tensions and dissensions within the Curia and – inevitably – among the Irish add to the complications. Against that background Keogh picks out a loose caucus of well-placed Sinn Féin sympathizers among the Irish clergy, two of whom receive special prominence: the polymath William Walsh, Archbishop of Dublin between 1885 and 1921, and Monsignor John Hagan, Rector of the Irish College at Rome between 1919 and 1930. The crucial importance of the latter is a secret prized by Keogh from that College's archives.

The influence of these clerics was in a sense negative. Nevertheless it was decisive. It frustrated attempts both within the Irish bench of bishops and at the Vatican to alarm the Church door against the revolutionaries by means of ex-

cathedra interdicts of them as violent extremists. The outcome vindicated these efforts and the sense of the situation that prompted them. The militants proved themselves in victory not to be secular revolutionaries, for the most part, but Christian populists driven to extremes by desperate circumstances – desperate, at least, in their own assessment of them. The eventual baptism of the revolution was a consummation wished for more devoutly by the revolutionaries than by the Church itself.

Keogh's narrative approach yields interpretative dividends in two other important respects. First, it allows him to emphasize the pastoral concerns which motivated Sinn Féin's ecclesiastical friends. These, he shows, were not *apparatchiks* bent simply on pursuing the advantage of their organization. They acted rather from an acute sense of the pastoral damage that would ensue from driving the militants to the point of irremediable alienation. Second, his account of the bishops' involvement in politics in the formative years of the

new State corrects in rich detail a cherished prejudice of Unionists and latter-day secularists. The story as he unfolds it does not depict a burgeoning theocracy or even a holy alliance. Contact, as he shows, was rare and fraught with tension. The impression is of a positive anxiety on both sides to preserve the proper autonomy of political and ecclesiastical government, accompanied by a painful process of learning where and how to draw the line, given the aspiration, shared by both, to create a truly Christian society within the framework of a liberal democratic State.

This is an important book. It is a pity that it cannot also be recommended as a good read. Dermot Keogh is not blessed with the fluency that seems to come so easily to many of his compatriots. His sub-editor might have done more to rid the text of solecisms, clichés and occasional incoherence; and Cambridge University Press ought not to have committed the barbarism of printing names and quotations in Irish without the essential length-sign.

Life with Holy Father

Michael Walsh

PETER HEBBLETHWAITE
In the Vatican
214pp. Sidgwick and Jackson. £15.
0283 993243

Some years ago, the enterprising English editor of a radical American weekly religious newspaper, the *National Catholic Reporter*, hired Peter Hebblethwaite as its Vatican Affairs Correspondent. He moved to Rome, he learned Italian, established contacts, investigated the byways of Roman bureaucracy and then came home. He remains one of the leading members of the esoteric band of Vaticanologists, topping up his knowledge by regular excursions to the Eternal City; but the deadline for his weekly reports to the United States reads, without apology, "Oxford, England". A former Jesuit, Hebblethwaite acquired, along with his theology, that curious blend of loyalty and reserve towards the papacy which is a hallmark of the Society of Jesus. Yet, as he demonstrates in his new book, *In the Vatican*, by the case of the staunchly orthodox Bartolomeo Sorge, SJ, once editor of *Civiltà Cattolica* but now languishing in Palermo, the loyalty demanded by Pope John Paul II is absolute. The Jesuits have had a bad time.

Maybe distance from Rome is no bad thing. The city is replete with rumour; but as it crosses the breadth of Europe, the dross can be sifted. And it is dangerous to be too close to the handful of officials who run the Church; to understand the problems they face, Hebblethwaite suggests, might be to forgive them for the decisions they make. But one can certainly sympathize with them. There is a single bureaucrat in the Vatican for every 450,000 Roman Catholics in the world. (Of that ratio there should be in Washington, DC, 511 federal employees; but there are 300,000.)

The opening pages display a considerable sympathy for twentieth-century pontiffs. Hebblethwaite has been the biographer of one pope (John XXIII, reviewed in the *TLS*, December 28, 1984) and intends to be the biographer of Paul VI, all the while chronicling the dolings of the current Bishop of Rome. John Paul II emerges remarkably well from the chapter devoted to him in this book. Plus ça change, plus ça change, which will surprise no one except those who promoted his canonization. Plus ça change, plus ça change, which is uncanonized but is rebuked for, among other things, performing more canonizations than any other pope – which is not strictly true.

It is only later in the book, when Hebblethwaite examines the servants rather than the masters, that the drift of his argument emerges. Inevitably, *In the Vatican* will be compared to George Bull's *Inside the Vatican* (reviewed in the *TLS*, May 28, 1982). But the two are entirely different, so different that Bull's book is not even included in Hebblethwaite's bibliography. Bull's tone was deferential; Hebblethwaite's is quietly but insist-

tently hostile. The hostility does not spring from antipathy to the institution but from distress at a cause betrayed, the cause being, of course, the Second Vatican Council, with which Hebblethwaite began his career as a religious journalist.

He makes an exception for the Secretariat of State, and clearly has a profound admiration for Cardinal Casaroli, who is at its head. Most of the other departments he believes to be committed to the policy of "restoration" associated with Cardinal Ratzinger, head of the powerful Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (what was once called the Inquisition). Some parts of the bureaucracy, most notably the departments established at the time of, and since, Vatican II, are fighting a rearguard action. Their chances are slight. Popes were once content to change the face of Rome: John Paul II seems determined to change the face of Roman Catholicism. The evidence is there for all to see. In no other area could one man wield such extraordinary authority, yet the only serious challenges from those over whom he rules came in a packed square in Managua, and in the embarrassingly empty streets of Den Bosch during the papal visit to Holland.

There is more to *In the Vatican* than an account of how papal government works. Indeed, a good deal goes unexplained: there is nothing on the Vatican City State; nor is there any account of the Holy See (had there been, Hebblethwaite's description of papal diplomacy might have benefited, for reference to its origins in papal temporal power is misleading). His book is an exercise in the history of contemporary Roman Catholicism, and as such it is honest (Hebblethwaite acknowledges his occasional past mistakes) and splendidly readable.

Unhappily it bears marks of being too hurriedly put together. There are misprints, and footnotes are frustratingly absent. "Development is the new name for peace" comes at the end, rather than at the beginning, of *Populorum Progressio* (p72), and more alert copy-editing might have excised some of the repetition. Such failures are irritating, but they do not materially detract from a vigorous indictment of present Vatican policy.

Hebblethwaite prefers to let the officials speak for themselves – officials such as the French Canadian Cardinal Gagnon, for example, who informed the American RC public (a public of considerable financial significance for the Holy See) that "Whenever the bishops come to Rome, the Pope tells them what he wants on morality and catechetics and so on. But he doesn't have prisons to put them in, so many go back and don't obey"; or Archbishop Fagiolo, of the Coorgo gallo for Religious and Secular Institutes, for whom there is "no substantial difference between the Word of God and the word of the Pope".

Among some Anglicans it is commonly said that the problem of Christian reunion is not so much the office of the papacy as the manner of its exercise. After reading *In the Vatican* one can see what they mean.

Perceptions of the other Middle Ages

Alexander Murray

JACQUES LE GOFF
L'Imaginaire médiéval
352pp. Paris: Gallimard. 120fr.
207 070386 X

"One would think that for fourteen hundred years", wrote Michelet in 1857, "the only people in France were kings, ministers and generals." History as pure past politics was already declining by that year. Its fall was completed by the *Annales* school, which admits no kings or ministers at all, except as accessory to economic and social studies, or to studies of mentalities. Jacques Le Goff is an editor of *Annales*, and a writer who has himself, for over twenty years, poured out books and articles on these mentalities to their medieval phase. *L'Imaginaire médiéval* collects papers he has written since his last collected volume, *Pour un autre Moyen Âge* (reviewed in the *TLS*, October 13, 1978), which was translated as *Time, Work and Culture in the Middle Ages* (1980). The word "imaginaire" in the present title includes both the purely imaginary, like the Land of Cockaigne (a thirteenth-century invention) and concepts of things perceived, like forests or time. While all the papers relate somehow to this "imaginary" they are bundled into five sections: "the marvellous"; space and time; the body; the imaginary and literature; and dreams.

"Le merveilleux" is represented chiefly by a long paper on Western concepts of marvel, first given at a colloquium on the Marvellous in Islam. The message of this one is that *mirabilia* only earned notice from Christianity, which was basically "allergic" to them, because they were there when it arrived. *Mirabilia*, by contrast – distinguished by having a single divine cause, not the multiple causes of marvels – were essential to the new religion. How precisely these *mirabilia* are to be understood is illustrated by the next essay, a collection of twenty-four "marvels" from Gervase of Tilbury. A tower near Valencia will not allow night-watchmen to use it: any who seek to do so will find himself deposited, during the night, gently but inexorably on the grass below. Near Embrun is a rock easily movable by pressure from a finger. St Caesarius of Arles once introduced wind to a wilderness valley by enclosing it in his glove; and so on.

The Space and Time section gives two essays to space, three to time. From a collaborative volume, *Le Désert*, Le Goff reprints a study of Western attitudes to desert and forest, starting with the Old Testament and coming down to the *vastae solitudines* of forest which hermits and monks made their home in the twelfth century, and from which – according to a famous passage in Bernard of Clairvaux – they learned more than they could from books. Next comes a short piece, from a volume on the year 1274, which portrays the second Council of Lyon as achieving a new level of spatial perception, not least because Lyon was picked as being a central communication-point for Western Christendom, like Avignon later.

Turning to time, Le Goff admits us, as if he were Dante's Cato, to purgatory, the world he made his own with the publication of *La Naissance du Purgatoire* in 1981 (reviewed in the *TLS* of June 18, 1982, and translated into English in 1984). The first essay, written for a collective volume on popular culture, enquires how much there was of that in literary accounts of voyages to the Beyond ("l'Au-delà"), accounts of the sort which would culminate in *Purgatorio*. The elusive relation between learned and unlearned cultures is well caught in a quotation from an anonymous thirteenth-century Italian clerk, introducing such a "voyage". He had heard it, he says, from an illiterate who had intimated, as well as he could and "in his mother tongue", a report he had heard originally from a learned man. The scribe, who of course wrote Latin himself, ends by describing one more adventure in the odyssey. "I have added nothing but what is permitted to scribes", he says revealingly; "I have put events in order, adapted ancient meanings to new, added Moses' word, Elijah's salt, and the wine Christ made from water. I have done this, not to deceive, but to enhance the elegance of the account." No wonder literary historians are kept busy. Philosophers will be kept equally busy with

the other main Time essay. It is on "purgatorial time". How does time after death relate to time for the living? The nearest a medieval pope came to heresy, as it happens, was on the question whether saints enjoy the Beatific Vision at the moment of death, or have to wait with everyone else until the Second Coming. Purgatory (where souls "do time", so to speak) introduces more complications, especially since a soul in purgatory may experience the period of his sentence differently from his experience of time on earth. (In fairy-stories a traveller may think he has been away for a day but return to find his playmates grown old; with purgatory it is the other way round.) As if these concurrent time-systems were not intricate enough, they are even further complicated by the adding of the earthly time-scale of penances used to measure the gravity of sins (so that a "two-years' indulgence" means indulgence for sins which would have called for two years' penance on earth). Le Goff's sketch of these questions is just long enough to accommodate a hypothesis. He says, here and in his book (a controversial one, he is said), that purgatory and its attendant system of Masses for the Dead only reached maturity towards the late Middle Ages. This, as it happens, was just when



The vaults of Le Mans cathedral; reproduced from *Ordnance Architecture by Louis Grodecki* (222pp. Faber & Faber. Paperback, £12.95, 0 571 14513 9) in the *History of World Architecture* series.

mechanical clocks were invented. Clocks would henceforth "control" everyday time, which had hitherto been "controlled" by the bells and religious offices of the Church. Thus the Church, Le Goff argues, compensated itself for loss of control of the time of day on earth, by erecting a system for controlling time in the *au-delà*.

After a brief section on "the body" the author devotes the longest section in this book to "the imaginary and literature". In it he re-examines well-known texts from a new viewpoint, that of the structuralism inspired by Claude Lévi-Strauss. The first such text is Chrétien de Troyes's *Yvain, ou Le Chevalier au lion*. Le Goff concentrates attention on that part of the poem where Yvain, having prolonged his adventures beyond the year's leave granted to him by his wife, Laudine, has forfeited her loyalty. Now he goes mad with remorse and wanders as a "wild man" in a trackless forest. Le Goff sees the forest as the "desert" *par excellence*: it desocializes Yvain. The desocialization is marked by his loss of bearings (space) and memory (time), as well as by his having lost his clothes to bits (nakedness) and taken to hunting his food (which he eats raw) – he hunts it incidentally with a stolen bow; the bow being shown from other documents to be a low-class, cowardly weapon (at least in a society of mounted knights: the Welsh version omits the "bow" detail). The desocialized Yvain is launched on his cure by a hermit, a characteristically ambivalent figure between the social and the unsocial, who gives Yvain bread in return for the hunted carcasses – a process of barter which is again, economically, half-way between the two extremes of natural and monetary economy. Finally comes the lion. His role is to resocialize Yvain, who has earned the lion's vassalage by intervening, at a critical moment, in the lion's duel with a manifestly evil serpent. All this may read like myth. And like Lévi-Strauss's myth, Chrétien's narrative partly reflects, partly invents,

real contemporary conditions. It reflects them, for instance, in the scenario of assorted forest where many episodes occur. It invents them in that Yvain, like all Chrétien's heroes, faces his adventures without the encumbrance of the brothers or fathers, an encumbrance we know (from Georges Duby) to have afflicted real twelfth-century knights.

This, in brief, is Le Goff's thesis on *Yvain*. Its subject is traditionally the most baffling of Chrétien's romances. Le Goff's structuralist approach to it cannot be said to have taken us right "out of the wood". But until someone else does so, the essay is certainly worth the effort (it is an effort) of reading. The second and third main essays in the Literature section are less arcane. One analyses those passages in Chrétien's *Erec et Enide* which describe clothes or food, both items pregnant with social symbolism. Another, a long one, reflects on the image of city and citizens in twelfth-century French epics and romances: the city is a rich and coveted prize of war, to be violated "like a woman".

The corpus of *L'Imaginaire médiéval* ends with Dreams, and in particular with a fifty-two-page essay on Christianity and dreams from the second century to the seventh. Ancient religions, it says, gave dreams a leading role in the discovery of spiritual knowledge. The new religion, Christianity, therefore viewed them with suspicion; and dream-reading was too often a mark of heresy in the early Church to endear the practice to authorities, despite its partial acceptance by saints like Ambrose and Augustine. At length an uneasy compromise was reached. As with other pagan survivals, dreams in general came to be associated with demons; demons not, like their ancient predecessors, an unpredictable mixture of good and bad, but always bad, servants of the Devil. The few acceptable dreams were acknowledged to come from good demons. These were reclassified as angels, who by definition were messengers of the one God. However, such private divine messages were naturally kept to a minimum by champions of a church monopoly in divine communication. So dreaming as a whole remained suspect. Thus, in Le Goff's view, was created "une société désorientée dans le domaine onirique".

This last suggestion is typical of many in this book: attractive, original, plausible, hypothetical, faintly anticlerical and, equally faintly, tending to esotericism in the manner of its expression. All these qualities, good and bad, characterize the book. To some degree they reflect the origin of the papers which compose it. At least half of them were produced – as in the colloquia on Islam, or dreams – in the academic context of specializations other than the author's own. Mixed audiences can give a good writer momentum. They encourage synthesis, generalization and the utterance of an expert's impressions (phrasealike "je crois percevoir" and "il me semble" are relatively frequent here). But the same milieu, by discouraging close criticism, can slacken certain disciplines; and in this book they have done so in two particulars. One is in the recurrent appeal to a notion which the author never stops to examine. Kings and ministers have been dismissed. But a bogey called "l'Église" keeps appearing (sometimes as "les clercs"). It can appear at any place or time in the fifteen centuries which form Le Goff's long *moyen âge* (an attractive concept, by the way, justified in the introduction); and it appears, whenever and wherever it does so, with the homogeneous simplicity of a dart's dub. (*Je crois percevoir* that the author was once camed by Jesuits, and is whacking back.) Secondly, while Le Goff's structuralist argument does indeed yield *aperçus* both new and sound – some have been indicated – the two qualities are not combined with sufficient consistency to hide a certain clumsiness, of a sort inherent in almost any private terminology. At worst, Le Goff's "other Middle Ages" can read like a house-agent's description of one's own house: the approach is new, the language is new, but it is the same old house. But that is at worst. Let us judge talent at its best, and be fair to both Le Goff and house-agents. A fresh pair of eyes, after all, searching according to a new formula, can – and in this book often does – reveal a hidden cupboard here, an unused staircase there, and even, at times, a window no one has looked through before.

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New lines on ancient life

Mary Beard

BERYL RAWSON (Editor)
The Family in Ancient Rome: New perspectives
 279pp. Croom Helm. £18.95.
 07099 4202 8

"If—good luck in you—you bear a offspring, if it is male, let it live; if it is female, expose it." These instructions from husband to wife preserved in a papyrus letter of the first century AD should warn us against treating the ancient family as something we can intuitively understand. The letter, though often quoted (unconvincingly) as evidence for a widespread practice of differential female infanticide in the ancient world, better illustrates the striking alienness of its family relations. Even in those areas where the biological overlap with our own experience seems greatest, cultural attitudes, knowledge and expectations are quite different. As Paul Veyne has recently stressed, a Roman citizen father did not "have" a child, he "took" it or "lifted it up"; the child's entry to family life was not the instant of its emergence from the womb, but the moment of its recognition and acceptance by its father. "Biological" birth was distinct from "cultural" entry into the human world.

It is one thing to recognize cultural alienness, quite another to incorporate it into writing and understanding. If some essays in this new collection, *The Family in Ancient Rome*, occasionally lapse into expressions reminiscent of a conservative NSPCC inspector ("even amongst slaves conditions far an enduring and stable family life could exist"; "inscriptions also reveal many single-parent families"), it is probably a feature quite simply of the relative novelty of the subject-matter. For few studies before have covered such a wide range of topics in Roman family history—from wet-nurses to Vestal Virgins, from foster-children in the property rights of woman.

The most interesting and useful contribu-

tions are those concerned with legal status within the Roman family and particularly with the rights of women. Outstanding is John Crook's analysis of women's position in Roman succession and in the transmission of family property. Crook implies in a wickedly self-deprecating footnote that all those concerned with the Roman family will already be familiar with this legal background. Quite the reverse. The complexities of Roman private law remain baffling to most historians of the ancient world and this lucid chapter alone will be sufficient to recommend the book. Suzanne Dixon takes a more specific legal topic; she examines one well-documented case of women's dowry and property arrangements—that of Terentia and Tullia, Cicero's first wife and (thrice-married) daughter. It provides a rare opportunity (well handled by Dixon) to evaluate day-to-day actions and expectations in matters of women's property against the strict legal provisions. Perhaps predictably, the law turns out to be important, but not the only influential factor.

More problematic are those studies based heavily on the evidence of Roman inscriptions—particularly tomb inscriptions. Most of the

authors readily admit the difficulties of using this type of material for the study of Roman family and social life: tomb inscriptions may tell us much more about commemorative habits than about underlying social "reality" or demographic trends; they may blind us by their use of apparently standard formulas to the everyday complexities of social life and status. The honesty of such admissions is gratifying; but honesty on its own does not solve the problems.

The study by Keith Bradley on wet-nurses is a case in point. It seems likely a priori that wet-nurses were a common phenomenon in the Roman world. There is no need to adduce any cultural preference on the part of the female elite of Rome against feeding their own babies. High rates of perinatal mortality and deaths of women in childbirth must have produced large numbers of motherless babies and babyless mothers at all levels of society. The problem is how to identify wet-nurses in the epigraphic record and what conclusions may be drawn from the identification once made. There is no firm ground. The single word *nurtix* which commonly occurs on tomb inscriptions may mean either wet-nurse or nursemaid; and

Bradley is far from convincing in his optimistic claim that the "primary meaning" was wet-nurse. Even the apparently more specific term *nurtix lactans* does not end our uncertainty, for (as Bradley properly admits) we have evidence of at least one male of the species—a *nurtix lactans*—who clearly cannot have earned his living breast-feeding. Bradley suggests he was a bottle feeder, which is not absolutely impossible given the survival of some feeding-bottles from antiquity. Alternatively he might "simply have assisted the nurse proper in such tasks as dressing, changing and bathing the children". Then the apparent specificity of the adjective *lactans* disappears.

Inscriptions seem to offer a way into areas of the ancient world neglected by major literary sources: in particular the family life of the relatively humble (though not the very poor). The loving husbands, devoted wives and loyal slaves of the funerary monuments demand attention. It is ironic—but, given the problems inherent in the epigraphic material, understandable—that in this volume and many others the strongest, most insightful work comes from those concerned primarily with the elite texts of Roman literature and law.

Systems, and bits of systems

D. R. Shackleton Bailey

ELIZABETH RAWSON
Intellectual Life in the Late Roman Republic
 355pp. Duckworth. £35.
 07156 19683

Not long before Julius Caesar was murdered, a Greek savant living in Rome wrote a treatise on Homeric prosody, largely devoted to accents. Cicero asked his lifelong friend Atticus to send it over, and added:

The book itself will not please me more than your admiration of it. I love a man who takes all learning for his province, and am delighted to find you so enthusiastic about so rarefied a study. But that is of all over. Knowledge is your desire, the only food of the mind. But pray, what bearing has any of this stuff about grave and acute on the *summa bonum*?

Cicero was not quite comfortable about disinterested intellectual curiosity, though he did not disapprove of it as strongly as Seneca a century later; and most of his countrymen would have felt the same.

The chapter titles in the longer of the two parts into which *Intellectual Life in the Late Roman Republic* is divided ("Intellectual life in Rome and Italy" and "The Arts") show both how widely Elizabeth Rawson has cast her net and how large was the role in Roman intellectual life of utilities such as rhetoric, law, architecture, medicine, and the various methods of divination. Even antiquarianism and historiography had a moralistic and patriotic basis. Cicero's leading intellectual interest, aside from the oratorical discipline which underpinned his career, was of course philosophy, and he shared it with some leading contemporaries: Cato, Brutus and the formidable Varro, a walking encyclopaedia whose mind did not match his erudition.

Varro looms large in Rawson's survey. Cicero is present only as a source of information, though without him, in her own words, intellectual life in the Ciceronian age must be *Hamlet* without the Prince. A reviewer of her biography remarked that she seemed most at home with Cicero in his library. She has preferred not to go over old ground, an understandable decision but a pity all the same.

Another notable absentee is poetry. Except for Laevius, whose vanished "Toys" have left hardly a fragment to whet our curiosity, Latin poetry had been pretty much in abeyance for several decades (so much so that the in this respect indifferently gifted Cicero was its brightest star, if Plutarch is to be believed), until it sprang to life in the 60s BC with Catullus and his fellow "new poets". Promoted on by Cicero, the "neoteric" movement flourished, and the great Augustans, Virgil in particular, could not have existed without it. In its way it was a distinctly intellectual trend, drawing heavily on the esoteric literary scholarship of Alexandria. But Rawson explains that "fundamentally the book is concerned with figures

of the second rank and general patterns". Catullus, and Lucretius, barely surface.

"General patterns" does not mean generalities. By meticulous assemblage of detail Rawson shows who in Rome and Italy practised the various "arts" and what these "arts" amounted to. The evidence is sporadic and often hypothetical ("the Alexandrian philosopher Arcius, who may have been teaching Octavian by 45, may have followed Caesar from Egypt"), but this first garnering is a valuable contribution (the value would have been even greater if the book had been provided with a full index instead of a mere list of proper names). It will be used and respected as a storehouse. If it offers no clear and coherent view of what and how Romans were thinking in this eventful period, that is not altogether in its disfavour. Masterful delineations like the last chapter of Mommsen's *History* are pretty sure to mislead. Rawson's treatment is at any rate innocent of tendentious over-simplification. All the same, one can't always see the wood for the trees. The reader who looks forward to an adequate summation in the "conclusion" may find himself disappointed. It is mainly concerned with post-Ciceronian developments.

Interesting generalities emerge by the way. "The role of the many learned Greeks who worked in Rome is . . . not altogether easy to decide." But Rawson argues persuasively that it has sometimes been overestimated. The ancient habit of exalting theory over experience and experiment, which more than anything else will have precluded antiquity from the mixed blessings of modern science and technology, is illustrated at many turns. Cicero's translation of Aratus' versified handbook of astronomy adds "descriptive adjectives that sometimes make small constellations huge and dim stars brilliant (he does not seem to have gone into his garden to check)". The man who was to write his pleasing essay *On Friendship* in serene disregard of the realities of Roman *amicitia*, which none knew better than himself, was turning true to later form. Similarly Vitruvius "does not seem ever to have gone out to look at the sky, to judge by his errors in the relative position of the constellations". The most fashionable doctor of the day, beppily named Asclepiades, denied that food is digested, "refused to accept the obvious function of the kidneys" and would not ascribe sensitivity to the nerves. Did Nico's lost monograph "On Over-eating" show a like detachment?

At this period Rome learned the importance of classification. An "art" was a skill or pursuit which lent itself to description by categories. The method was sometimes applied with more enthusiasm than judgment. Varro "on one occasion, having established at least 99 classes of soil, takes fright and reduces his *discrimina*, distinctions, to only three". But whatever the extravagances of "the convert's zeal for systematization" (Oxonomania, shall we call it?), this was a major intellectual acquisition, as Rawson forcefully emphasizes, comparing it

in a striking passage to "the passion for Aristotelian logic that seized intelligent minds in the eleventh and more fully in the twelfth centuries." Rome passed it on.

This is a formidably learned book, and the learning is rarely marred by a mistake. Sextus Pompeius, Pompey the Great's uncle, was not, strictly speaking, an aristocrat (p5). "It is a well-known fact that none of the most famous . . . Latin authors can be proved to have been born in Rome" (p19): true, but Julius Caesar was a Roman aristocrat (his unknown birthplace is not material), and the lepidary style of the *Commentaries* may owe something to that fact. A passage in Horace's *Epistles* is misunderstood on p31. On p71 Aristarchus does duty for Aristoxenus. Poce Syme and Bowersock, Cicero's and Suetonius' Niclas of Cos should not be too readily identified with the tyrant of that name (p72). As Rawson well knows, the only surviving verses of Julius Caesar criticized not Menander but "Menander halved", ie Terence (p109). Caesar Strabo was not the Dictator's uncle (p110 and elsewhere), but a much more distant connection. The elder Catulus was Marius' colleague as consul in 102, not 100 (p228). Let us be fair, even to Cornelius Nepos; when he calls Atticus (born in 110) and Hortensius (born probably in 114) coevals (*coevals* of Cicero, who was born in 106, he was using a word loosely rather than getting Cicero's age wrong (p231). Dicaearchus' "Constitution of the Peloponnese" (p236) may not be a simple misprint for "Peloponnese"—there was a Greek town called Peloponnese. The statement that Cicero owned a copy of Aristotle's *Topica* (p290) is questionable; despite what he says himself, his *Topica* has nothing to do with Aristotle's. I wondered what my name was doing in n17 on p236 until I dawned that this is really two notes, not one. A Latin word is misspelt on p67 and Greek words on p200 and p283. English misprints are harmless and hard to find, once past the second sentence of Chapter One.

A book consisting so largely of miscellaneous factual items of no great interest in themselves cannot make easy reading; and the writing, despite touches of quiet humour, does little to spice a necessarily stodgy dish. But no student of this period can afford to ignore it.

In *Roman Britain: a sourcebook* (266pp. Croom Helm. £18.95, paperback £9.95. 07099 1315 X), S. Ireland aims "to assemble as many as possible of those sources that would otherwise be obtainable to readers only with difficulty or at considerable expense" and "through translation, to make them available to the growing number of students who approach the history of Roman Britain through the medium of English". It incorporates numismatic and epigraphic evidence as well as extracts from writers ranging from Caesar and Tacitus to Gildas and Zosimus.

That interesting play

Reyner Banham

GAVIN MACRAE-GIBSON
The Secret Life of Buildings: An American mythology for modern architecture
 215pp. MIT Press. £24.95.
 0262 13203 6

The worst aspect of *The Secret Life of Buildings* is a prose style which may strike the reader as a candidate for *Private Eye*'s "Pseudo Corner" or "Block that Metaphor" in the *New Yorker*.

This modest aqua wall, advancing toward the intersection, and visible several blocks away, establishes the connection of the house to the general psychological condition of Los Angeles, which is bound up in its foremost symbol, the heaving Pacific, dissolver of memory. Once this connection is understood, the meaning of certain elements of the house becomes clearer. Over the front door, rising above the flat plywood rocks, is a wild, teardrop-shaped chain-link fish-tank with an off-center pivoting chain-link lid, hovering like a cirrus cloud.

The good news, nevertheless, is that this prose is much less obscure and self-regarding than in most other writing about so-called Post-Modern architecture. What Gavin Macrae-Gibson offers is a set of studies of seven American buildings in this loosely Post-Modern category: Frank Gehry's house in Santa Monica; Peter Eisenman's "House El Even Odd"; Cesar Pelli's "Four Leaf Towers" in Houston; Michael Graves's notorious public office building in Portland, Oregon; a house in the Hamptons by Robert Stern; a former supermarket converted into law courts by Allan Greenberg; and Gordon Wu Hall on the Princeton campus, by Venturi, Rauch and Scott-Brown.

This is an odd and non-representative set, but they suit Macrae-Gibson's book, which unravels the connections; references and historical echoes of the designs under scrutiny. His discourse is hardly deconstructionist, however, more like everyday iconographic art history, and the "mythology" advertised in his subtitle is not—intentionally—what Roland Barthes might have meant by the term, though if one pauses to imagine what Barthes could have done with a supermarket which has been converted into law courts—the stately aneers about dispensing justice like convenience foods, the scorn poured upon the imperialist pretensions of the Tuscan columns supporting vaults painted on "innocent" sky blue, and so on—one sees how limited are Macrae-Gibson's intentions in architectural hermeneutics. He

does not, for example, discuss or illustrate to the court-rooms, only the newly added classist facade and lobbies.

In an introductory chapter he states explicitly that the discussion "specifically excludes many important topics" and will touch only briefly upon "function, physical structure". Among the topics thus excluded are aesthetics, public responses, and quite a few other key issues about architecture as a civic art. Instead, he gives extended treatment to anything that is suitable for scholarly—dare one say scholastic?—elaboration. The author is an academic talking about architects who, with one significant exception, are academics or former academics with continuing university affiliations, and the scholarly interest in their work is generally interesting enough to support his erudition.

The word "interesting" is used here in a rather specifically academic sense suggested by a perceptive article ("Modernity's Bad Conscience") by the Yale philosopher Karsten Harries in the current issue of the *AA Files* (available from the Architectural Association, 36 Bedford Square, London WC1 at £9.50). Observing that Robert Venturi, the founder of the Post-Modernist movement, had launched it under the slogan "Less is more" as a counterblast to Mies van der Rohe's Modernist "Less is more", Harries presses the implications of an architecture which consciously sets out to be, at all costs, "interesting".

He finds it a doomed project, since "Graves's use or abuse of the keystone motif has, no doubt, been interesting. . . . But . . . repeated, such dislocations will soon become boring." Nevertheless, he proposes that while it lasts there will be an "aesthetic of the interesting".

Consider Graves's Portland building. It certainly isn't beautiful in its traditional sense, but John Paster is not obviously right when he called it "on the whole . . . an aesthetic failure". Given so aesthetic of the interesting, the building must be judged a success, as the publicity it has generated demonstrates.

On the topic of the Portland building, Macrae-Gibson is appropriately interesting, though less so than on the Eisenman project, on exercise in pure academic professionalism and philosophical solipsism. Since it has not been built, anything that Eisenman says about it beyond the physical facts of the model is as true as Macrae-Gibson is prepared to believe it is, so that architect and author are perfectly matched. Indeed Macrae-Gibson is often so good a match for his subject matter that MIT

Tenacity and the communal spirit

Andrew Saint

ALAN McDONALD
The Weller Way: The story of the Weller Streets Housing Co-operative
 222pp. Fober. Paperback, £2.95.
 0571 13963 9

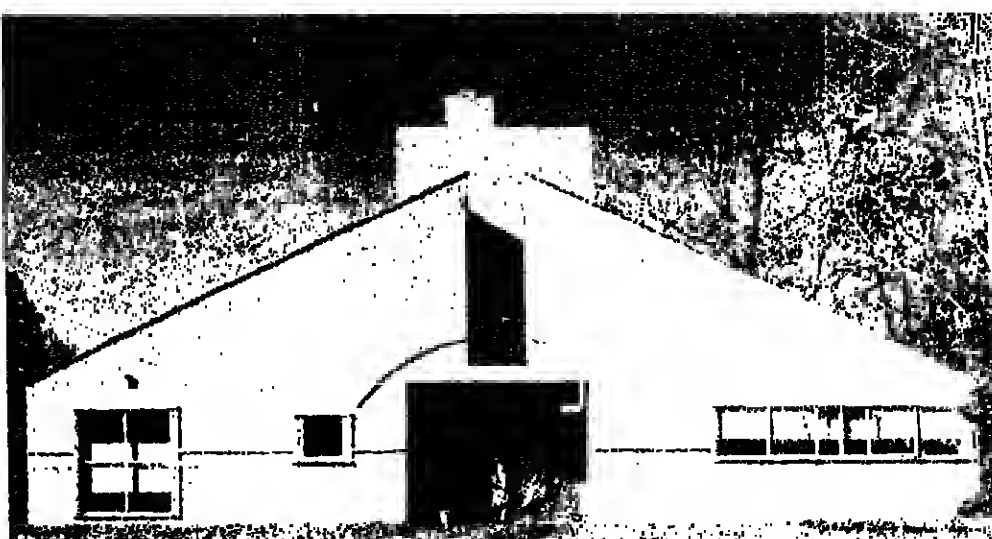
Two paragraphs into this book, the reader runs into the heir to the British throne invoking the King-heter and Anglophobe Thomas Jefferson: "I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of society but the people themselves, and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion."

The occasion for this paradoxical little outburst of republican rhetoric is a scheme of commonplace brick courts and houses built between 1980 and 1982 in the stricken heart of Liverpool 8. They are not much different to look at or indeed to live in from the friendlier kind of housing lately achieved in the new towns and elsewhere. What is special about them and has raised plebeian and professional spirits alike, never mind royal ones, is that they were in important senses conceived, designed and built by their tenants, through the medium of a housing co-operative: "Weller Streets" was not quite the first "new-build housing co-op" in modern Britain, but it was the first time working-class urban families have got together and organized to solve their housing plight by their means. Its membership was unusually motivated, its propaganda extraordinarily suc-

cessful. *The Weller Way* is not a study of the current movement for co-operative housing but a belated piece of Weller Streets propaganda, a war-and-ell record of their struggle.

Since struggle above all is what Alan McDonald has tried to put across, his finished picture is a pretty depressing one. It is not just that the tenants lived for years in grim, impoverished conditions, fobbed off by indifferent private landlords and a sluggish city corporation ("the corpse") lumbered with a dismal housing stock. It is not even that once they hit upon the idea of a co-op they became entangled in red tape. The co-op was established in 1977 and the last new houses were finished in 1982, hardly an interminable period by housing standards. The appalling thing is the amount of human sweat, aggression and plain tedious time that went into securing at best a little more end in many cases a lot less than what most readers of this paper negotiate in a few hours of paperwork with a mortgage company. What Billy Floyd, the milkman who was the strongest single force in the co-op, wants people to remember about Weller Streets are "the fucking boring balls-aching meetings in freezing rooms". Put another way, the tenacity and communal spirit represented by Weller Streets has to be admired. But you have to be blind or sentimental not to recognize also that participation of this intensity is a desperately wasteful way of building decent, ordinary homes. It is not so much an alternative to our bankrupt housing traditions as their *redemptio ad absurdum*.

A persistent theme in *The Weller Way* is mistrust between the tenants who ran the co-op and the "professionals" who tried to steer them



Facade of a house for Mrs Venturi by Venturi, Rauch and Associates, 1962-4, reproduced from *American Architecture* by David P. Hendlin (228pp, with 250 illustrations. Thames and Hudson. Paperback, £4.50. 0500 20200 1).

Press are to be congratulated on having apparently found Post-Modernism's perfect critic. On Gordon Wu Hall at Princeton he is particularly appropriate.

Its architect launched the style, while professing at Yale, exactly twenty years ago, in a short book entitled *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, and Macrae-Gibson's Yale-trained methodology expertly unpicks the sources of Venturi's wide-ranging eclecticism, from the Princeton campus itself to Jacobethan England. And since Wu Hall is good in more parts than the curate's proverbial egg, the reader will find this extended exegesis of the quotations, visual puns and concealed allusions helpful in explaining why the building is so (precisely) interesting.

To apply the same weighty *apparatus criticus* to Stern's Bozzi house in East Hampton, however, is to smother that less robust design, and as applied to Cesar Pelli's two chamber-topped towers in Houston the apparatus seems largely wasted. It fails to make them seem any less boring than they appear on the territory, where glassy-surfaced towers with strange profiles are now abundant enough to produce a kind of Gresham's Law of progressively debasing architectural quality, and only thoroughly depraved designs, like Burgee and Johnson's brilliantly tawdry Transco Center—a full-scale model of an Art Deco skyscraper done in out-price glazing—can manage to be noticeably interesting.

from the sidelines. Weller Streets was lucky in its professionals, or perhaps adept at controlling them and bringing them to its own way of thinking. But the co-op would never have happened had not CDS, a radical housing association, bought the old houses, suggested the initiative and supported it throughout beyond the bounds of economic reason and good will. Architects, a quantity surveyor, housing experts, community workers and council officials succumbed to the mixture of charm, guile and sheer ruthlessness meted out by the co-op members who, confronted with vast obstacles, displayed the resourcefulness of the desperate. But though the professionals tried to conceal the degree of direction which they in actual practice exercised, they were always there. As Max Steinberg of the Housing Corporation (which funded the project) puts it: "In essence they thought, and I think still believe, that they bent the system in some way. . . . I think in fact the system proved it could work for groups like them." The only moment at which the co-op nearly came unstuck was when the job had to encounter the market and went to tender. All the lowest bidders dropped out, unsure of what they had taken on; the quantity surveyor had to jump in and massage the figures.

The politics of the story offer no clear moral. A core of the Weller Streets activists saw themselves as socialists and had learnt about organization through their unions. "Fair shares" was a fundamental principle in the co-op and led to the decision to limit the variety of house-plans and types. The legislation which allowed Weller Streets to flourish was due to Reg Ffreeson, housing minister in the mid 1970s, who realized

If this essay fails, it does so less instructively than the discussion of Frank Gehry's truly remarkable "de-constructed" house, since the second part of that study must be accounted a real success. In its examination of the connections between Gehry's architectural imagination and the work of various leading contemporary artists. This is truly illuminating, though the first part, which yielded the quotation at the beginning of this review, fails to take a firm grip on the subject, which does not offer the certainties of exact iconographic or literary citation. Gehry is not a scholar like Stern or Venturi, nor a self-announcing solipsist like Eisenman, and the essential supports for his originality, outside his love for art, come from a practical, hammer-and-nails experience of the business of building in Los Angeles that is far more relevant than any invocation of a "heaving Pacific, dissolver of memory".

Gehry also has—and this is reflected in the house—a humane, urbane sense of the ridiculous, rather than the scholarly "irony" which Post-Modernists are supposed to exhibit, and this humour seems to elude Macrae-Gibson's apparatus precisely because it is not "interesting" in the sense identified by Karsten Harries. Indeed, it may be that "boring" old Mies van der Rohe exactly identified what separates Gehry's house from the rest of the buildings discussed when, long ago, he said of his own work: "I don't want to be interesting; I want to be good!"

earlier than most Labour politicians the mill-stone which council housing was becoming and wanted to diversify British housing tenure. His name appears nowhere in the book. Yet in Liverpool it was the Liberal Party, antipathetic to further council housing, which encouraged the co-ops, and Labour, coming to power locally in 1983 after Weller Streets was completed, which argued that they represented queue-jumping, and that the priorities of housing desperation must be democratically decided. Some say that this is a policy of spite-neighbourhood; others that when finance for subsidised housing is niggardly, it should not just go to those sharp or lucky enough to act for themselves and find good advocates. Whichever way you argue, it comes down to cash—and how you get it.

The Weller Streets story may not be edifying but it was brave and successful. It has been an incentive for more co-operative schemes of the same type in Liverpool and beyond, no doubt far the most part better managed and more peaceably conducted as a result of the Weller Streets example. Co-operation and participation look like being the vogue for low-cost housing in the immediate future. They are inadequate as methods of solving the immensity of housing needs, but they are well worth pursuing further. It is on the backs of the Weller Streets tenants and their helpers that this movement began to get off the ground.

Recently published is *The Royal Institute of British Architects: A guide to its archive and history* by Angela Mace (378pp. Mansell. £32.50. 07201 1773 9).

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A culture torn asunder

Dervla Murphy

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Behind the Forbidden Door: Travels in China
270pp. Allen and Unwin. £11.95.
0049510258
CHRISTINA DODWELL
A Traveller in China
160pp. Hodder and Stoughton. £9.95.
0340376406

The subtitle "Living in China", rather than "Travels in China", would have done more justice to Tiziano Terzani's remarkable book. No traveller would he be allowed to probe as he did into the everyday routines of the Chinese people and their institutions. For four years he was based in Peking as an accredited journalist — one of the first to be admitted to China in 1980 — and he lived as close to the ordinary people as the authorities would allow (and sometimes closer than they knew). He also travelled widely without an escort, interviewed officials up to the average journalist's list of contacts and used his fluent Chinese and knowledge of recent Chinese history and politics to assess the policy developments that took place during his four years of residence. He would have stayed longer but he was becoming too daring: in 1984 the Security Police arrested him and after a month's "re-education" he was expelled as "someone no longer suited to live in China".

In 1968 Terzani was one of many students, all over the West, who fervently idealized Mao's China: "If our world was old and imperfect, if past hopes had turned into great delusions, here was a new chance. China was not going to be another Soviet Union . . . China was different, and thus China became a myth." Most of Terzani's contemporaries soon outgrew that phase but he tended the myth, studying Chinese at Stanford, lecturing in Chinese history at the University of Florence, going to the Far East in 1971 as *Der Spiegel's* correspondent. (He speaks and writes equally fluently in five languages.) When Deng Xiaoping pulled back the Bamboo Curtain in 1980, Terzani

with his wife and children hastened to Peking. After all those years of waiting, studying, admiring from afar, the Chinese reality was devastating. He found a country in which "Deng's reforms have brought advantages and some material progress, but accompanied by new injustices, new privileges and corruption. Above all, they are making the Chinese dangerously insecure about their own culture, their own values and ways." Terzani's agony of disillusionment, his grief, anger and despair, are painfully evident in this book. The physical destruction of old Peking is so powerfully described that by the end one feels emotionally drained. And Terzani mourns not only the obliteration of libraries, tombs, temples and palaces all over China; still more harrowing is his account of the crushing of a myriad small domestic traditions through which, from time immemorial, Chinese culture had manifested itself in the lives of ordinary educated people. He is not writing of the mighty wealthy landlords and warlords, but of what we would call the urban middle-classes who had lived in small, simple, elegant houses, leading quiet industrious lives in which harmony, dignity and visual beauty were important. Now ten or more families live in one such home — since 1949 the population of Peking has risen from 1.2 million to 9.2 — amid squalid disorder, misery, mutual suspicion and fear.

In regions where only one child is legal, with increasingly heavy fines to be paid annually for a second, third or fourth, some villagers keep a large bucket of water by the bedside of a mother in labour. The 1982 census revealed an already dangerous sex-imbalance in the population and soon an article appeared in the

China Youth Daily — "Save The Baby Girls". Groups of heavily pregnant women are sometimes rounded up, taken by truck to the local hospital and given abortion injections. In Hebei Province a Party Secretary ordered a huge banner to be displayed outside a regional hospital: **THE BEST BABY IS A DEAD BABY**. But even in present-day China that seemed like excessive zeal and the area's doctors went on strike until the banner had been removed.

Terzani chose to travel by "hard-seat" train and, when he had reached his destination, by bicycle. He describes Manchuria and Qingdao, Qufu and Tibet, Shandong, Kashgar, Xinjiang, Guangzhou. "Thus," he writes, "I slowly came across a magnificent, human China, a China I had never dreamed about, a China much more real than the one the officials want to present to the western public." The two Terzani children supplied added insights by attending a Chinese school in Peking and they have contributed a splendid chapter to this book, written when they were fourteen and twelve-and-a-half.

Behind the Forbidden Door has been much praised (it was first published in German in 1984, then in Hong Kong) but the chapters — each evidently written as a separate newspaper article — are uneven in quality. Terzani is at his best on Peking, the recent revival of "the small game" and of kung fu, the relationship between politicians and people. Other articles are mere routine reporting: competent, punchy, informative, yet sagging towards the superficial. Sometimes it seems that his emotional involvement with his subject goes beyond what is good and useful to a writer; he doesn't

merely sympathize with China's present tragedy, he is personally torn asunder by what has been done to the people, their country and their inheritance. He is bewildered and enraged by China's present course: "Though poor and underdeveloped, China is not simply another country of the third world. China has an immense tradition and civilisation of its own. Why then does this great country forgo, even renounce, its own path to development and happiness and borrow instead ideas and values born under completely different skies?"

A Traveller in China prompts the thought that people setting out to write their China book should from now on exercise geographical selectivity and concentrate on one area. It was different a few years ago, when the first trickle of foreigners was admitted; then merely having "been to China" justified a book. In five months Christina Dodwell journeyed from Xinjiang to the Pamirs, along the Silk Road to Peking, back east to Inner Tibet, then south along the Burma Road and finally down the Lijiang River to Canton. She carried a canoe as well as a tent in her rucksack and made several detours to regions unvisited by foreigners for decades. Sometimes she camped out, sometimes she slept in trucks, village inns, nomadic tents; she has forever demolished the notion that in modern China travellers must stay in tourist hotels. She is an observant traveller, respectful of local sensibilities and with a gift for being accepted in the most unlikely places. All the ingredients for a first-rate book are here, yet — sadly — *A Traveller in China* is only moderately good. The author's impersonal, monotone style disguises the danger, excitement and suspense which marked her extraordinary journey.

apart as Buenos Aires, Philadelphia, Dublin, Paris, Geneva, Venice, Istanbul; on the islands of Crete, Mallorca, Iceland; by the pyramids of Cairo; at a Shinto temple in Japan. The photos are sometimes funny, often touching.

Atlas is a delightful book. There is plenty in this slim volume to justify its price because Borges, like Beckett, manages to say much in few words. Among the five poems, five dreams, many literary and philosophical ruminations, is a memorable tribute to Robert Graves in his last days, "beyond time and free of its dates and numbers".

Borges tells us of meeting a tiger, going up in a balloon over Robert Louis Stevenson's Napo Valley, and discreetly "modifying the Sahara" with a handful of sand. In the Hotel Esja, Reykjavik, Borges gropes round his new room and encounters a pillar. He explores and embraces the white cylinder; sudden happiness comes as he remembers discovering the pure forms of Euclidean geometry in childhood. In

Ireland, he feels his way around a round tower "where, during hard times, the monks who are our benefactors saved Latin and Greek, that is, culture, for our inheritance".

Borges reminds us that cities are made of memory and reading, but he also knows the fragility of civilization. In the final fable of *Atlas*, set in Japan, the gods weigh up mankind's inventions. There is "an invisible weapon which could put an end to history", but there is also something "which fits in the space encompassed by seventeen syllables." Borges's faith lies in the infinite potential for meaning of the perfected haiku, not the grotesque chaos of the destroyed atom.

The penultimate piece in *Atlas* returns to the Recoleta Cemetery in Buenos Aires, the site of his family tomb:

I will not lie here. My hair and my nails will lie here, and they will not know that the rest is gone and they will go on growing and will become dust. I will not lie here, but will be part of oblivion, the tenuous substance of which the universe is made.

ble feelings of affection or pride, but only "so humiliated by my own country". A minority reaction, to say the least.

Dr Daniels provides a horrendous account of the lives of English-speaking drug traffickers incarcerated in a Bolivian gaol, but only forty pages later he is himself found trying the stuff, and accepting the gift of cocaine from a casual acquaintance (admittedly he flushed it down the sink fairly promptly thereafter). He was perhaps lucky to get home safely. This is a lively traveller's tale.

Recently published is *The Gala Atlas of Planet Management* edited by Norman Myers (272pp. Pan. £9.95, 0330 284916), a reference guide to ecology, inspired by James Lovelock's view of the earth as a single living organism. The book is divided into seven sections (Land, Ocean, Elements, Evolution, Humankind, Civilization and Management), written by over sixty contributors, analysing threats to the environment and proposing solutions. The editor concludes, with relative optimism: "While population grows and grows, and habitats continue to be degraded on every side, there has been an extraordinary outburst of environmental agencies at official levels, and at grass-roots levels there are thousands of citizen groups, all seeking to come to grips with our problems."

Clare in Babylon

Tom Paulin

MARK STOREY (Editor)
The Letters of John Clare
705pp. Oxford University Press. £48.
0198126697

John Clare wrote before the long ice age of standard British English clamped down on the language and began to break its local and vernacular energies. The damage to English liberty for which that change in the cultural climate is responsible has yet to be assessed, but from Tennyson to the poets of the Movement and beyond we can see how a dead official language and a centralizing conformity have worked to obliterate individual speech communities. Now, as a slight thaw begins to release us from the hegemony of Official Standard, the sordid thread of Clare's poetry emerges like an underground stream. Listening to his unique and delicate sound-patterns the reader is caught in the blow-back of an immense historical suffering, and glimpses what happens when an oral culture is destroyed by the institutions of law, order and printed texts. Clare ought to have been the English Burns, but he is, as John Lucas remarked in these pages two years back, a great poet who has for long "been more or less invisible". He is a non-person, as anonymous as the grass he identified his social class, himself and his language with:

—So where old marble cities stood
Poor persecuted weeds remain
She feels a love for little things
That very few can feel beside
& still the grass elmsat springs
Where castles stood & grandeur died.

These closing lines of "The Flitting" are partly Clare's reply to those critics who believed he had coined words which were actually "as common around me as the grass under my feet". Though ostensibly a poem about the personal trauma of moving house, it speaks for the experience of being evicted by the economic and legal force of what E. P. Thompson calls, in his account of the effect of Enclosure on the field labourers, "an alien culture and an alien power". We wrong Clare's writing if we regard it as the timeless lyric product of purely personal experience — his language is always part of a social struggle, entangled with and pitched against Official Standard.

Clare emerges for readers in this society as a displaced, marginalized poet whose reputation is being gradually rehabilitated — as Mandelstam's is in the Soviet Union. It may be many years, though, before his name is given the kind of official recognition which is accorded to Wordsworth and Keats, and only when social readings of poetic texts have become generally accepted is it likely that his work will be widely read and studied. But it could be that Clare — shy, fearful, unbearably gifted — will never be redeemed from all the neglect and mutilation he has suffered. Like Mad Sweeney in Seamus Heaney's *Sweeney Astray*, he is a persecuted figure, a refugee in his own country.

fallen almost through death's door,
drained out, apked and toro,
under a hard-twigged bush,
the brown, jaggy hawthorn.

Clare's suffering is both personal and social because he speaks for all those victims of the Enclosure Acts which transformed rural England in the early decades of the last century. He compares Enclosure to a "Buonaparte" intent on destroying everything, and like Stalin's collectivization of agriculture, Enclosure was a form of violent and centrally directed social engineering. It was the Great Displacement, the crushing of a social class by market forces and political interests — Wapping in giant type.

The social forces that were to lift Clare up and then destroy him are prefigured in that fatted sense of alienation he describes five days after the publication of his first book, *Poems Descriptive of Rural Life and Scenery*. Writing to his friend Octavius Gilchrist on January 21, 1820, Clare includes an "Address to a Copy of 'Clare's Poems' Sent O. Gilchrist Esq." — a piece of light verse in which he imagines *Poems Descriptive* being given a gold-tooled binding. The actual volume is "plain & simple" like its author, but the "gilded coat" it may receive will elevate it beyond Clare's

social position, rather like an upwardly mobile son leaving his illiterate labouring father behind. Clare's father, like his mother and his wife, was illiterate, but the literate Clare is recognizing here that he's just as trapped as they are. Addressing his printed text, he says:

L—d knows I couldn't help but laugh
To see ye fix among yer betters
Upon the learned shelves set off
& flash about wi' golden letters

and he concludes by saying that if he and this sparky, proud volume happened to meet, the gilded book would "turn thy nose up wi' disdain / & think disgrace thy dad to own". This means that his reputation — symbolized by the national gold-binding — must always run ahead of him while he stays stuck where he is. He isn't worthy of his own work and must always be a stranger in the society which has created his reputation. He is writing against himself.

Thus oral tradition enters the metropolitan world of printed texts, but nothing is changed — the fruit of Clare's labour disowns him, and he exists only as a type of abject advertisement for a commodity labelled *Poems Descriptive of Rural Life and Scenery*. The good, the great and the chic may come to visit him:

they will not let me keep quiet as I used to be — they send for me twice & 3 times a show out of the fields & I am still the stranger poppet show what can their fancies create to be so anxious & so obnoxious to be satisfied I am but a man (& a little one too) like others

But Clare feels lacerated by their attentions, a puppet knocked about by audience, publishing industry and the reactions of his local community to his sudden fame. His gift has taken him away from that community and he begins to lose his sense of dwelling in the world — that "essence of dwelling" which Heidegger discusses in "Building Dwelling Thinking".

As Edward Storey demonstrates in his biography of Clare, the Stamford bookseller, Edward Drury, helped to initiate the process of Clare's alienation. Drury was among the first people to notice Clare's talent and he took a bluntly practical view of the commodity-value of his poems. Writing to his cousin, the publisher John Taylor, Drury said in June 1819 that he regarded Clare's manuscript poems as wares that I have bought which will find a market in the great city. I want a broker or a partner to whom I can consign or share the articles I receive from the manufacturer.

Six months later, on January 16, 1820, *Poems Descriptive of Rural Life and Scenery* went on sale and Clare was propelled into polite society. It is painful to watch his spirit being racked by that terrible numbing English deference. Writing letters to the educated and powerful, he concludes "I am Respected Sir Your Grateful Servant John Clare". He calls himself a "Pheasant" and a "Clown" and trembles under the mind-blowing attentions of bishops and aristocrats: "I send you some of the principal Subscribers which I have procured lately: the first of which is a Baronet!!"

This is the opening sentence of Clare's first extant letter, and those stunned exclamations marks point to the spiked trap Clare fell into — his success set him apart from his own community, while the system of patronage and publishing which created him could offer nothing but a fitfully marketable public image. The bare, nervous human being experienced this public attention as "all the cold apathy of killing kindness that has numbed me". It's little wonder the strain destroyed him. Like the badger in one of his finest poems, Clare felt hunted, torn and persecuted, a harmless victim of social violence.

To approach his experience we need to see the English class-system as a type of apartheid, a form of segregation which made Clare feel like a black slave chained in a plantation. Clare believed that slavery was "disgraceful to a country professing religion" and it would seem that at some level he felt himself to be a slave who had mistaken the brief kiss of fame for a lasting manumission. But Clare was initially no radical — "I am as far as my politics reaches 'King & Country'" — and it's clear that he tried to square his conservatism with the upsetting facts of his social experience. He became obsessed by an episode in which he'd addressed a stranger in Drury's bookshop as he might anyone else; the stranger turned out to be the Marquis of Exeter and Clare trans-

formed their tarse equal speech-encounter into a "cursed blunder", a shocking solecism that haunted him like damnation.

The agrarian unrest of the 1830s seriously disturbed Clare and in January 1831, he praised Viscount Althorp, the leader of the House of Commons and one of the chief supporters of the Reform Bill. Clare hoped that the government might be able to "find out the way to better the unbearable oppressions of the labouring classes" and he was divided between a fear of revolution and his identification with his own class. He tells Taylor that

the 'people' as they are called were a year or two back as harmless as flies — they did not seem even to be susceptible of injustice but when insult began to be tried upon them by the unreasonable & the proud their blood boiled into a volcano & the irruption is as certain as death if no remedy can be found to relieve them.

As Alan Sinfield has recently reminded us in his contribution to the Rereading Literature series, Tennyson was at this time an undergraduate at Cambridge, where he paraded armed with a club and helped put out fires that had been started by rebellious labourers. Yet it would be wrong to see Clare and Tennyson as being politically very far apart — both believed in reform and shared a similar patriotism. However, they were thousands of miles apart socially, and it's that sense of an absolute social divide which weighs on Clare in his letters. That divide is the real *ghulid*, the "bottomless" void between the classes which the "clown" stared into and was destroyed by.

Clare lived through and was spiritually damaged by the change from the free space of the open field system to the reticulated, boxed-in pattern of fields which Enclosure created. Two million acres of wild land were also enclosed and this seizure of "the common heath" traumatized Clare. It's difficult for us nowadays to register that shock, but a visit to the village of Laxton in Nottinghamshire, the last surviving example of the feudal open-field system, does help towards an understanding of the great change that hit Clare's community. To walk along a wide chalky track through gently sloping ploughland with no hedges is to step out of the owned space of fenced and protected private property into what feels like a free, almost floating environment. You are in touch with land and space and sky, and that sense of natural freedom depends on the absence of barriers and partitions. Here you can sense what England used to be like; once out of it you are pushed back against the artificially

"natural" world of thick hedges and rectangles which our ordinary experience tells us has been there always, eternally. The transition back into the enclosed world brings with it a certain sense of glumness and suffocation.

During his years in Northampton General Lunatic Asylum, Clare saw himself as being locked in the "purgatorial hell & French Bastille of English liberty" and from his corner of that hell the Ranter convert denounced "English priestcraft & english bondage more severe than the slavery of Egypt & Africa". For all the tough desperate moderation of Clare's professed social opinions in the pre-asylum years, his political subconsciousness is a territory of primal hurt and bondage where something wild — some uniquely sensitive spirit — tries to break away from all institutions. With its lack of punctuation, freedom from standard spelling and its charged demotic ripples, Clare's writing becomes a form of Nation Language beating its head against the walls of urbane, polished Official Standard. This is apparent in a letter to Taylor where Clare first attractively praises his publisher's editorial improvements and then adds: "you cross'd 'ghulid' I think the word expressive but doubt it's a provincialism it means tearing or thrusting up with great force take it or leave it as you please". Between "ghulid" and "gushed" there is a wide social gap that is like the distinction between hollow charm and a real social force, one that desperately wants to burst through all types of barriers and enclosures.

Ten years after his attempt to protect "ghulid" from extinction, Clare wrote to Taylor that he was "astonished" at finding words in "chaucer that are very common now in what is called the mouths of the vulgar". This is the reverse perception of that gold binding which Clare had imagined for *Poems Descriptive* and it shows him beginning to feel a confidence in his own language that Chaucer as literary institution, a well of ethnically pure English, had previously helped rob him of. Clare's identity is created in and through the language he uses and is then distorted by the changes forced on him by the need to tame that language in order to sell the poems it speaks.

Lord Radstock and other patrons insisted that Clare rid his poems of "radical slang" and ungrateful social sentiments, so the battle between the two nations is fought out in business correspondence about Clare's grammar and use of common speech. Taylor edits, shapes and sometimes rewrites Clare's poems, sends them back and Clare replies: "your verse is a

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John Ure

ANTHONY DANIELS
Coops and Cocaine: Two journeys in South America
230pp. John Murray. £10.95.
0719542626

This is the hardest type of travel book to write successfully. It contains (as the publisher remarks in the blurb) no epics of endurance by canoe or mule; the author is no Hanbury-Tenison. There is no discernible theme for his journeys: no preoccupation with trains as in Paul Theroux, or boats as in Gavin Young. Anthony Daniels has no special knowledge to impart about the region he traverses; he is no Leigh Perrier on Greece. Instead, he meanders through the South American continent — *South American Handbook* in one hand and Prescott in the other — jolting down random impressions and recording casual conversations.

That he has produced a very readable book says a lot for the sharpness of his eye and the receptiveness of his ear. There are frequent pleasing vignettes: of the Peruvian official stamping passports "as if waiting a particularly repulsive insect"; and of the "bloody and

baroque agony" of the images in Lima churches. The description of crossing the trackless Chaco between Peru and Bolivia, under the uncertain patronage of a local smuggler, conveys an authentically scary feeling.

The book is also a compendium of well-worn stories about South America: we are reminded of how Queen Victoria crossed Bolivia off the map after her ambassador had been insulted, and of how the ignorant dictator General Mälgarejo argued about the relative military merits of Napoleon and Bonaparte. There are also other folkloric statistics, such as how Paraguay won the Chaco war at a cost of two Paraguayan and three Bolivian dead for every square mile — "far more than it has ever supported as mere inhabitants", as Daniels is quick to point out.

It is a pity that Daniels appears to have disliked it all so much. Indeed, so great is his distaste for almost everything Latin American — not to mention such other local phenomena as consuls and missionaries — that the reader finds himself wondering why the author ever went back for a second dose. The sourness even extends to his own country and countrymen: when he watched the Prince of Wales's wedding on television in Cuzco in the company of others who were visibly moved by its sentiment and pageantry, he felt no such compas-

develish puzzle f may alter but I cannot nend grammar in learning is like Tyranny in government". His identification of this unfettered but precise language with English liberty is sometimes made through the figure of William Cobbett, whose writings Clare admired and to whose *Grammar of the English Language* he often referred. When we consider contemporary reactions to Clare's language we can see that every non-standard word he used could provoke a class anxiety and fear. That sense of threat is apparent in a reviewer's reaction to *The Shepherd's Calendar*:

We had not, however, perused many pages before we discovered that our self-suspicious were wholly groundless. Wretched taste, poverty of thought, and unintelligible phraseology, for some time appeared its only characteristics. There was nothing, perhaps, which more provoked our spleen than the want of a glossary; for, without such an assistance, how could we perceive the fitness and beauty of such words as - *crazzling* - *shivah* - *whinnies* - *greentig* - *toofles* - *crodding* - *hings* - *praggod* - *spudding* - *siding* - *strules* - &c. &c.

Those words have a beautifully ironic quality; each is a unique subversion of the upright efficiency of Official Standard, and the reviewer rejects them in an ungrateful institutional manner.

This constricting of language was paralleled by the enclosure of the countryside, and several years before mental illness set in Clare is already imagining himself trapped in Babylon. He encloses an imitation of the 137th Psalm in a letter to Taylor:

By Babels screams we sat & sighed
Yen we in sorrow wept
To think of Sions former pride
That now in ruin slept

Our Harps upon the willows hung
Cares silenced every string
Our woes unheeded & unsung
No hearts had we to sing

For they that made us captive there
& did us all the wrong
Insulted us in our despair
& asked us for a song

In Psalm 114 the psalmist begins by remembering how Israel "went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language", and in the psalm which Clare imitated he asks "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" Although Clare tactically avoids rendering that question in his version of Psalm 137, it is fundamental to the Babylonian experience he underwent. That experience is similar to the historical anger and suffering which befalls through the poems in James Berry's anthology of West Indian-British poetry, *News from Babylon*. The common cultural root is Bible protestantism - that driven, exulted, desperate identification with the scriptures which Clare gained access to through his early interest in Dissenting groups and when he joined the Rnners in 1824. It is hard to convey the intensity of such experience to those nurtured in more "balanced" or more theologically coherent cultures, and similarly the term

dialect that had no literature". He was writing in an English, the first English he knew, dominated by that Saxo element which he always felt should have more place in the standard national language. It cannot be said that his experiments in saxonizing the standard language, or the acute but bone-mad philology with which he backed his claims, pointed a way forward. His significance is of a different kind.

Chedzoy has a close familiarity not only with Barnes's published works but with the notebooks and correspondence in the Dorset County Museum, and this enables him to give some lively touches to the familiar picture of the schoolmaster in Dorchester and the parish priest in Winterbourne Came - a picture the main outlines of which were established by Barnes's daughter Lucy in her *Life* (by "Leader Scott") published in 1887. Barnes was not a fraud, and there are no amazing secrets to be revealed. The depths of the man are in his poems, where they ought to be, and what is most valuable in later books on him is the more detailed exploration of particular aspects of his multifarious activities - as, for example, in Trevor Hearl's *William Barnes the Schoolmaster* (1966). Chedzoy does not offer this kind of specialist inquiry; he is Chairman of the William Barnes Society and, the publisher tells us, "well-known to Dorset audiences as a lecturer on Barnes and a reader of his dialect poetry". Barnes was in his own day well known for his readings to audiences which included many labouring men, and even after the Second World War his songs were sung by a pianist entertainer in at least one pub in a Dorset village. There was a genuinely popular element in these scholarly poems, though no doubt it has faded as the dialect has faded and the inhabitants have had access to "work-entertainment". Chedzoy's *Life* is, as he says, "short and omits much detail". He has "tried to use the poetry as biographical evidence"; he has had "the intention of re-interpreting" Barnes's *Life* "for a modern readership". Yet surely the task of a literary biographer is rather to use biographical evidence to re-interpret the poems. Chedzoy is, admittedly, not the only literary biographer to ignore the importance of the distinction.

The real significance of William Barnes, which one would wish to see celebrated at his centenary, is his triumphant and accurate use of ordinary speech in verse of great technical accomplishment. The lyricism of the songs is fetching, but a little volume which segregated the numerous dialogue pieces, the "eclogues", would establish his claims to be regarded as an important innovator, showing up the thinness and incompetence of most of the allegedly "conversational" verse produced since his day.

Crabbe and Clare had their own rural and small-town backgrounds of a kind not hitherto met in literature; but a closer parallel is with Mitral, who lived out his life in a few square miles of Provence as Barnes did in Dorset, made use of the local rural speech and, like Barnes, had his own passionate philological interests. But there are great differences. Provincial, even though long in decline, was a true national language with an ancient literary history; Barnes, as Hardy said, wrote in a

"culture shock" is inadequate to describe a torn speech struggling in its homelessness against the dead letter.

Clare's madness was therefore nothing less than his manner of living his society's history, and his idea of himself as black slave, prize-fighter, Bastille prisoner, captive of the Babylonians, combines images of social injustice with a symbol of individualistic escape from a rural slum (Jack Randall the prize-fighter). His oral writing speaks for and to all those who dream of unlocking a frozen lan-

guage and redeeming an unjust society; it is the more unfortunate that Mark Storey's excellent edition of his letters is prohibitively expensive, though it could prove the basis for a paperback selection. Storey very helpfully prints some letters to Clare from his family and from John Taylor, and this should prepare the ground for the eventual publication of the full correspondence with the latter. Let us hope that before the century ends Clare's works will be circulating in cheap editions and the road to Helpstan will be packed with astonished pilgrims.

Publishing Days

Sitting at a desk with my feet up
on the bottom drawer, reading manuscripts,

I have a vision of an author, in his underwear
at the typewriter. Through a window
come noises: boys playing ball, the diastole
of traffic. But he is oblivious,
typing away faster than I can read.

Now and then I leave my desk
and stroll about . . . look out the window
to the Hudson, where the ocean liners
tie up: the *Elizabeth*,
the *New Amsterdam*, the *Ile de France* . . .
and sit down again. The work is pleasant,
undemanding, and underpaid.

I go to literary gatherings
where editors rub elbows with authors
and agents. There are familiar faces:
Maller, Styron, Baldwin, Bellow,
and many that have since disappeared.

The room is filled with smoke, a hubbub
of talk about paperback sales
and Hollywood contracts. The door keeps opening
with more and more crowding to get in,
like the cabin scene in *A Night at the Opera*.

Sometimes I take the train
to Old Greenwich, Connecticut,
where the head editor has his bouse.
There the party is continuing . . .
more novelists, more literary agents,
and some of J. B.'s more personable neighbours:
a corporation lawyer, say, or psychiatrist.

We play games like Twenty Questions . . .
a game, I recall, in which you choose
one of the people in the room
and they all guess, by asking questions,
which one it is. Questions such as,
"If this person were an automobile
what kind of automobile would it be?"
Frequently this leads to a discussion
of the person's character . . . sometimes flattering
and sometimes, definitely, not.

One weekend there is a hurricane
and flood warning. Cars come up Old Clubhouse Road
from the beach, honking their horns.
But J. B.'s house stands on higher ground
and, he assures us, we are in no danger.

With time things that never happened
seem as real as things that did.
The house is floating out on the Sound
with lighted windows, and a voice
from inside it, faintly heard,
is asking, "If this person were a vegetable
what kind of vegetable would it be?"

LOUIS SIMPSON

Timeless identities

Robert Sheppard

ROY FISHER
A Furnace
48pp. Oxford University Press. £4.95.
0192819585

When Roy Fisher's *Poems 1955-1980* was published, it made available to a wider audience a poetic enterprise of great importance that had hitherto been granted only limited - often scanty - press - circulation. Suddenly, he achieved what the Americans call "visibility" and he seems to be following Basil Bunting's re-discovered poet of unfashionable difficulty and suspicious foreignness.

The comparison with Bunting is pertinent: *A Furnace*, like *Briggflatts*, is a long poem of ambitious scope, consisting of lyric passages arranged as sequences, employing a variety of technical devices and free-verse styles. In the marvellously evocative "Introit" to the main poem, Fisher points the reader back, both to his long work *City* (1961), concerned with his native Birmingham, and to the defamiliarizing poems of the 1970s, the period of his perceptual "scratch ontology".

Even in *City*, Birmingham had to be "made strange" and hallucinatory, but here Fisher is under such compulsion, although characteristically "metaphors, riddles, resemblances" are continually offered by the surface aspects of things. But he has a more questioning, less playful, approach to the mystery of a perception

that keeps a time of its own,
made up from the long
discrete moments
of the stages of the street,
each bred off the last as if by
causality.

In earlier poems these "discrete moments" and their imaginative transformations had variously oppressed and delighted Fisher; in *A Furnace* they are subordinated to his search for a validating - and not merely scratch - ontology. Metaphoric play no longer simply counteracts the riddle of evanescent appearances, it enacts the quest for identification in disparity. Fisher acknowledges the ambivalence of this when he deploys his old trick of emptying the metaphor of its tenor:

a stain in the plaster that so
resembles - and that body of air . . .
that's like
nothing that ever was.

What had previously been the operation of an individual post-Modernist imagination has become a universalized, Romantic principle; Fisher notes, with approval, John Cowper Powys's contention "that the making of all

kinds of identities is a primary impulse which the cosmos itself has". *A Furnace* attempts to reveal these "timeless identities" riding in the flux" by working on some of the moments at which they schlep personal or historical "materialization" or "the coming into / . . . the guesswork of the senses". They can range from the perceptual transformations implicit in s

skein of connections from
lichens to collapsed faces
in drenched walls

to the ancestral evidence of "William Fisher, / age ten years, occupation, jeweller" in nineteenth-century Birmingham. The continual comparison between, and superimposition of, urban Birmingham and rural Staffordshire - which, again, owes much to Powys - suggests topographical transformation.

The familiar notion of the "pulimpest" of succeeding settlements on one site is presented as though it were a speeded-up film (which accelerates at industrialization), but Fisher emphasizes discontinuities of culture. Cultures are formed by the collision of active forces, not by their collusion, and are entropic: "unstable, dividing, grouping again / differently". This, combined with frequent evidence of working-class scepticism about civic authority in the "primordial" lives of ordinary people, ensures that there is no unifying vision of cultural identity, no totalizing myth. Romanticism's flight from industrialization is turned back on itself and a mercurial "Nature" is an inescapable fact, "an imperative", for the urban population.

The poem - though it has a clear form and an elaborate plan - is heterogeneous and un-hierarchical. Fisher's attempts to encapsulate cultural history do not always quite convince (nor does the occasional lapse into panderous diction that signals uncertain reverence). Fisher is working to extend his range in this, his longest work in verse, only by working against the grain of his sensibility. When a thought or a movement of ideas is presented with the fidelity accorded to natural processes, the writing is sparklingly brilliant; but inert fact and commentary undermine the phenomenologist in Fisher. However, at his best, a few of his lines can tersely present the balanced relation between his new-found metaphysics and his view of cultural change:

Clarity
of the unmoving core
comes implacably out
through all that's material:

walls of battleship scrap,
the raising up of Coenart
along the skyline,
the taking of it down again.

In compassion and revolt

Stephen Romer

JAMES BERRY
Chain of Days
94pp. Oxford University Press. £4.95.
0192119648

To read the long title-poem of James Berry's collection *Chain of Days* is to rediscover expressive language. Its imagery is rich, its rhythms various, its meaning direct and its idiom inventive and highly personal. Its matter is the Caribbean (Berry was born in Jamaica and came to England in 1948), particularly the way the natural brilliance of the Caribbean islands is shot through with the darkness of their colonial history. In Berry's best work, nature and history coexist, but the former precedes and follows the latter, enlacing it in the maternal principle: "My mother knows how to ignore my father. / My mother puts food and clothes / together out of air. Bush and bark and grasses / work for my mother".

This ability to ignore the father is important, because it is he who is associated with the problem of history, and more particularly of heritage, which the son must confront. By re-narrating with his father in a spirit of compassion and revolt, Berry finds his most compelling theme, and it recurs throughout the

book. It is rooted in the particular, as the poet looks back to his childhood: "My father stutters before authority. / His speeches have no important listener. / No idea that operates my father / invites me to approach him." This childish frustration is taken up in later poems where the same feelings find a more intellectual formulation, as in "New World Colonial Child": "Father's learning long taught / him, he's too lazy / to be man, too worthless / to be paid for work".

There can be no simple way of sloughing off his father's defeated attitude, and beyond it the deep psychic damage inflicted by slavery; although it may be invisible, Berry implies, the feel of it is none the less inescapable. The majority of the poems in this book address the problem of racism, either anecdotally, as in "God's Greatest Country, 1945", about racial intolerance in the United States, or in the grave rhythms of "Reclamation".

By the candour of her utterance, very nearly all the poems in this collection, including the vivid short poems in Creole, command respect; but I think Berry is at his best when he allows the maternal principle. In its sensuous West Indian incarnation, to hold momentary sway - as it can do even in the markets of London to which, as he affirms in the final poem, the "Caribbean hills have moved and come" in an array of sweet-smelling fruits and herbs.

First Blood II

Simon Rae

JOHN HEATH-STUBBS
The Immolatio of Aleph
96pp. Manchester: Carcanet. £4.95.
0856353577

John Heath-Stubbs's new collection displays all the characteristics of his previous books - an impressive range of subject-matter and vocabulary, a deep but lightly worn erudition, and a wide diversity of forms, from the tightly rhymed lyric to baggy free verse. As so often in the past, Heath-Stubbs sets as a kind of unofficial laureate, producing commemorative verse to mark, for instance, the birth of Prince William, and the birthdays of his friends and fellow-poets David Wright, George Barker and Charles Causley. On show too is his precise knowledge of nature, down to and including the "Theatre of Insects". (Reading these closely observed meditations on beetles, ladybirds, moths, butterflies, wasps and bees, one would never imagine that Heath-Stubbs is now blind.)

Heath-Stubbs's joy in the multifariousness of the natural world is often expressed simply through listing: the poet revels in inventories of birds, beasts or flowers. His best-known poem, "The History of the Flood", fittingly derives from the story of Noah's Ark. And *The Immolatio of Aleph* contains more celebratory readings-off: "Rudducks, Dunnocks, / Citrils, Serins, Siskins, Spinks, / Orphean warblers, Ortolans, Golden Orioles". Despite this Adamic impulse, however, when we actually meet Adam in the title poem, he is not naming but killing - sacrificing the Ox (Aleph), in the biblical tradition the first creature to die at the hands of man, and as the poem goes on to demonstrate, only the initial letter in mankind's alphabet of blood. Though this is carried

through with Heath-Stubbs's usual assurance, the ground has been worked over before - by, among others, Byron, Clough and D. J. Enright.

A similar staleness dogs Heath-Stubbs's return to classical subjects, though he attempts to inject a contemporary interest by adopting a colloquial tone and applying modern attitudes or insights to his chosen heroes. Thus Alexander is made to ask: "Mother, how far must I go / Before I'm free of you? / How much more must I destroy, father / Before you will believe me?" And Julius Caesar reflects: "in the end / I will go up to heaven and be a god. / Meanwhile here in Rome / There's muddle to clear up." Far more satisfying are the poet's excursions into the less distant past, such as "Nixon, the Cheshire Prophet". Nixon was a rough peasant in the time of James I, with a strong line in doom-laden prophecies. Partly out of interest, end partly to shut him up, James invited him to Court. Nixon refused at first, struck by an intimation of death - by starvation. Nonsense, retorted the King, you can live in the kitchens. The cooks, however, found the unkempt and pilfering prophet getting under their feet. "So they put him in a hole - It was a disused wine-cooling vault - and threw down scraps / From time to time, but not ungenerously." But then the court moved to Windsor, and Nixon was forgotten. "For days and days, / His cries reverberated through the vaults, / But fainter and fainter . . ."

For all his ranging over the vast span of human myth and history, Heath-Stubbs is perhaps most firmly at home in a continuing tradition rooted in the English countryside, and glimpsed here in the closing lines of the last poem in the book, "Before Dawn":

These are the wheatfields
Orient and Immortal, that Tsherene
Recalled, that Kilvert looked upon -
As, in their priestly hands, the stuff of time trans-
mutes.

After the still-to-be-enjoyed

Tim Dooley

RON BUTLIN
Ragtime in Unfamiliar Bars
51pp. Seeker and Warburg. £3.95.
0436078104

Like the late W. S. Graham, his fellow Scotsman Ron Butlin creates fictions which insist on their own fictional status. He has considerable lyrical and narrative gifts and a strong visual imagination - all of which are used comparatively conventionally in the title-poem, a dramatic monologue concerning the frustrations of a piano teacher and composer. Elsewhere the scenes he creates hover uneasily on the verge of self-effacement. Again and again Butlin reminds us that his poems are linguistic constructs, their scenes "coloured-in" by the imagination, orchestrated from unreality in the service of an uncertain vision.

Your fingers were pressing down keys; they released
as silence spanning one moment, the naming,
the counting and colouring-in

of all that you were, so briefly, just then.

Such an aesthetic of unease, with its consciously expressed doubts over the validity of its own processes and its strong sense of the temporary, is familiar in recent British poetry. Butlin's individuality rests on his narrowness and thoroughness of his application of this aesthetic inside a specific literary tradition - that of the metaphysical love lyric. He takes from Donne and others a vision of the all-inclusive erotic bond gallantly flattening lovers while threatening the substantiality of the world around them:

Hours earlier you were darkness as love itself
midnight you ground more finely with each kiss,
straight you scattered out of reach.

Lovers may fashion their own universes, but if - and this seems to be Butlin's experience - love is fragile and short-lived, such universes must exist in advanced states of entropy. In "The Embroidress" he watches as a woman stitches figures which "embrace in silence /

then slowly tear themselves apart". A further conceit has him as the embroidress, passion making no identity between lover and beloved:

Fascinated I watch my fingers work busily
tessing a trail of me and women
upon a roll of cloth.

For too long I have been struggling with this dream
of endless stitching and endless mutilation:
everything depends upon the moment of awakening
- a moment that may have already passed.

A real abyss seems to lie behind Butlin's fascinated pursuit of the still-to-be-enjoyed; a fear of death that is approached directly in the final poems of the volume and a sense of the "depth and distance" of "The Gods That I Know Best".

As a whole, though, *Ragtime in Familiar Bars* is spirited in its refusal of glumness. Its cycles of deconstruction end on a triumphal note with "all the world" trapped outside the lovers' bedroom widow. Butlin's sensuous use of language convinces the reader that this is the world's loss.

PENGUIN CLASSICS

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her own future, is the trait which
precipitates her tragic destiny; a
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love her.

THOMAS HARDY
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Behind the lines

Lorna Sage

It is only three years ago that Mrs Betty Trask died, romantically leaving the bulk of her estate to the Society of Authors in trust, to set up awards worth £17,500 a year for first novels of a romantic turn, by writers under thirty-five. Already, however, the society has discreetly revised the rules. According to Isabel Colgate, chairman of this year's judges, it was always wrong to imagine Mrs Trask as a Mills and Boon addict - her surviving friends have explained that what she really liked was a good book with a plot and characters, and as little like *Ulysses* as possible. This now comes out in the society's paraphrase as "first novels (published or unpublished) of a romantic and traditional - not experimental - nature". The prize money "has to be used for travel abroad" (though not, doubtless, as an excuse for exile, silence and cunning). In fact, it sounds very like a prize for a novel by Anita Brookner (except for the ungainly Booker Prize panel, to shift that prize back in a more adventurous direction. Especially since there don't seem to be enough convincing traditionalists in go round: there was a detectable air of embarrassment at the Society of Authors' party when it became clear that the winner of the largest slice (£12,500) of Mrs Trask's legacy - Tina Parks's *Tongues of Flame* - was also a runner up for last year's Sinclair Prize, and had already won one of the Somerset Maugham awards, as had another short-listed novel, Patricia Ferguson's *Family Myths and Legends*.

One person who wouldn't have been a hit surprised is Mr Sydney Leon, Founder, Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer of the Society for the Unpublished Author, who has just announced his own rival prize: "known as the

1986 SUPA 'Founder's Award' for an original unpublished work in any category that has been rejected by an agent and/or publisher . . ."

Mr Leon turned to writing late in life, and discovered that to be a writer is to be uniquely powerless - "powerless to do anything more about one's work than send it to a publisher". He is now convinced that only the published are published, strange as it may seem, and only the prize-winners win prizes, and that it is time for the army of mute inglorious Miltons to make themselves into a pressure-group, buy their own printing presses and do it themselves. So far, his advertisements in the Sunday papers have, he says, produced all sorts of new authors undreamed of by the publishing establishment - for example a little old lady of eighty who has written a torrid lesbian yarn set in a comprehensive school ("the setting is spot on"). Mr Leon himself is working on a history of the rise of the cinema, based on his own experience of "a lifetime in the business" ("I knew Sidney Bernstein in the old days - when he was skint, truly, boracic lint"), and this time will know better than to send it off unsolicited to join the piles of sad, unread manuscripts that he sees all the time in his mind's eye. SUPA operates from Box 261, 427 Upper Richmond Road West, London, SW14.

Jeremy Bentham's stuffed skeleton was ceremoniously wheeled out the other day at University College London, to preside over the inauguration of the International Bentham Society. It is an offshoot of the Bentham Project at University College, currently one of the largest academic enterprises in Europe, started in the mid-1960s, and devoted to producing the first definitive edition of the *Works* (twelve volumes already published, fifty-odd to come). The "international" emphasis is appropriate: Bentham has always been a prophet without honour in his own country (Hazlitt remarked in his lifetime that he was much better known in Europe, best known "in the plains of Chili" [sic]

and the mines of Mexico") despite the attentions of people like A. J. Ayer and Lord Robbins (a great admirer) who helped get the Project off the ground.

Somewhat, says Dr Fred Rosen of the UC team, the British have managed to caricature Bentham as an authoritarian figure, whereas in truth he was a libertarian. Radicals and revolutionaries from all over the world best a path to his door in search of draft constitutions - but then they had read him in French (in the 1802 edition by his Swiss disciple Etienne Dumont) not in the crabbled, careful English that Hazlitt thought was what kept Bentham from being tried for high treason, because it relieved his fellow countrymen of the obligation of understanding him: "He writes a language of his own that darkens knowledge", wrote Hazlitt darkly. The vast manuscript collections at University College, and in the British Library, and the Dumont Collection in Geneva, contain material that was too controversial even to be published in Bentham's lifetime, like the eminently rational pieces on homosexuality celebrated in Louis Crompton's splendid *Byron and Greek Love* last year (reviewed in the *TLS* of September 6, 1985). Dr Rosen expects that Bentham on open government and on the arguments for generous legal aid (which he was the first to propose) will prove equally topical, if less exciting.

The International Bentham Society will publish a new journal, *Utilitas*, to replace the present Bentham and Mill newsletters; members will also be able to buy the new edition at reduced rates.

At auction

H. R. Woudhuysen

The outstanding items in Sotheby's Western manuscripts and miniatures sale on June 24 are mainly of English interest. Chief among these must be four early thirteenth-century single leaves illustrating the life of Thomas à Becket with remarkably attractive pictures and an otherwise unrecorded French text in rhyming octosyllabic couplets. This fragment may derive from either St Albans Abbey or Westminster, but its subsequent history is uncertain; by the time of the French Revolution it was in Belgium and has only been known to modern scholars by an edition published in Paris in 1885. The charm of these fragments lies in their graphic and very jolly illustrations of the life of one of the most famous of all medieval Englishmen. As they have been abroad for at least two hundred years, if not more, it would be gratifying if they were to remain in Britain. Their pre-sale estimate, however, is fairly daunting at £200,000-£300,000.

The other English items are striking, if not quite so spectacular. Thomas à Becket turns up again in an early fifteenth-century astronomical calendar from Yorkshire, which as well as having pictures for each month of the year also has some useful tables (Dominical letters, eclipses), the Kings of England and famous events in world history. This small book was probably made for someone scarcely literate as it contains the very minimum of text; it is expected to fetch £2,000-£3,000. It is followed by an equally attractive book, an unusually finely decorated early fifteenth-century copy of the Wycliffite Gospels, which is estimated to go as high as £25,000. It is in turn followed a little later by two legal manuscripts produced in London c1460-1480, one of the Statutes and one a register of writs: they are estimated at £1,500-£2,500 and £2,500-£3,500 each. A seventy-two leaf fragment of the Old Testament commentary of St Paternus written, possibly at Reading, just after the middle of the twelfth century in a rather elegant romanesque bookhand, with nearly three hundred painted initials, is expected to reach £7,000-£10,000. Two other English items with royal connections deserve to be mentioned. Attached to a charter issued at Rouen c1187-8 is an apparently unrecorded seal of King John as Earl of Mortain and there is also what is almost certainly Henry VII's own copy of the statutes of the Order of the Golden Fleece prepared for

Biografia, the new biography bookshop in Covent Garden ("books about popes and politicians; sports celebrities; entertainers; artists; writers; Royals; magnates and minors [sic]... a thousand square feet of real lives") seems, according to director Nigel Hamilton - biographer of Montgomery - to have hit on a sudden and sinister recession in the book-selling business. One might have thought that biography at least was safe (isn't every bookshop a biography bookshop?), but no. Perhaps, Mr Hamilton speculates gloomily, that long-foreseen catastrophe has happened - "the new generation of non-literate people, the ones with the money". Biografia was planning, anyway, to branch out into video and film, as well as publishing; ironic, though, that they have coincided with yet another new literary prize specifically for biography, offered by Loyds brokers Nelson Hurst and Marsh, via the Authors' Club (another one for Mr Leon to cross off his list, a grandly exclusive body with seventy-five members, most of whom seem to be lawyers, secreted within the Arts Club in Piccadilly).

A last laugh from the labyrinth: on June 24 Jorge Luis Borges was due to present the *Pisno Novecento* (for someone who has added to the sum of wisdom and beauty in the world) in Palermo. The rules say that the present incumbent chooses his successor. Borges, who joked two years ago that he'd have to be represented by his shade, chose, with impeccable irony, Henri Cartier-Bresson - the blind man bonding on the baton to the great photographer.

Letters

Kant on Faith and Reason

Sir, - It is Kant's fault that he wrote very few quotable sentences, but that is no excuse for misquoting them. Roger Scruton does so twice in his article headed "The philosopher on Dover Beach" (May 23).

Kant did not say that he destroyed the claims of Reason to make room for the claims of Faith, nor did he do such a thing. The sentence alluded to in the *Critique of Pure Reason* says: "I have therefore found it necessary to deny knowledge in order to make room for faith" (Kant's emphasis). There is nothing here about restricting reason for the sake of faith. Kant is not in the long line of philosophers from St Thomas to Kierkegaard who denied or restricted reason in favour of faith. Where there is a conflict between faith and reason, unreasonable faith for Kant is not religious, but a witch's brew of enthusiasm, superstition and fanaticism (*Schwärmerei*). Kant's sentence means that theological positions are productions of pure reason in its moral function, not in its cognitive function. Hence we do not have knowledge in matters theological, but a faith which is, according to him, purely rational.

Professor Scruton says that Kant teaches that human life as a vehicle for freedom is to be treated not as a means to our purposes but as an end in itself. He leaves out Kant's important little word "only". Human society could not exist if we did not use each other as means to our ends. Kant's categorical imperative commands that we should treat humanity also as an end in itself.

LEWIS WHITE BECK.
Department of Philosophy, University of Rochester,
College of Arts and Sciences, River Campus Station,
Rochester, New York 14627.

Basil Bunting and Christian Orthodoxy

Sir, - Donald Davie's account of Basil Bunting under the heading "God in recent poetry" (May 23) is highly misleading in suggesting that "he wanted a God that was as much the God of Islam as the God of Christendom". It's true that Bunting urged constantly the injection of Islamic culture into European culture, but Davie's statement begs the whole question of whether or not Bunting wanted a God at all. Given the nature of Bunting's spiritual experience, which was, as Davie says, (a) highly personal and (b) tinged with pantheism (some would suggest atheism), it is surprising that Davie makes such assumptions. During his life Bunting was quick to refute theistic arguments (Ode 36, we are plainly told, is "not intended as an argument for the existence of God"), and he would, one suspects, be horrified at Davie's deduced moral from *Briggflatts*: "The world can end at any time... it is entirely at God's disposal..." (my italics).

Significantly, "Bunting's God" (if one can use such a phrase) is usually remote and off-stage, not unlike the
Furthest, furthest things, where, free of our humbug,
each his own, the longer known the more alone . . .
- in the closing section of *Briggflatts*. Much earlier in his work, the line "by God, by God knows whom" stresses a remoteness of causality. The God who Davie feels "makes his presence felt" in the poem never turns up to give the all-important message, leaving us with an impassive, bored angel. More Godot than God? Certainly Bunting was well aware of the ironic overtones of this section, after which the hero ceases to strive for remote absolutes and goes home spiritually: "awakened to the real world".

Perhaps Bunting's religion is best sought in his more neglected poem *The Spoils*, descriptive of a return (cultural and physical) from Persia to Europe, amidst the spoils and ruins of war. The quotation ascribed to the poem reads "The spoils are for God", although the poem leads remorselessly to a human conclusion with the author recalling convoys on a war-torn northern ocean:

He good a grave as any, earth or water,
What else do we live for and take part
We who would share the spoils?
That which was God's is ours: we may

"answer that of God in every man" - but we are far from Christian or Muslim orthodoxy: Bunting's open and often repeated scepticism is ill-served by other people's dogmas.

RICHARD CADDELL,
Piccadilly, 7 Crossview Terrace, Neville's Cross,
Durham.

British Library Lending Services

Sir, - T. A. Birrell (Letters, May 23) deplores the recent announcement that certain categories of books in the British Library, now available for reference only, may be loaned through our national library interlending network. He questions whether this is a public service to the humanities.

I would like to reassure Professor Birrell that when he visits our London reading rooms he will almost certainly be able to refer to the books and journals he requests.

A real decline in government funding has forced the British Library Board to look at every possible economy, and to choose those which are least damaging to the integrity of our collections. One of these is to take fewer duplicate copies. This means that some material - mainly foreign serials and monographs - will be available for both reference and inter-library loan; but this does not affect British publications received on legal deposit, rare or fragile items, or material which is known to be in regular demand.

We have to have regard to the needs of scholars and researchers who access our services remotely, as well as those who use the reading rooms. Having less money, we must either reduce duplication or acquire a narrower range of titles. We shall monitor carefully how the change works out in practice.

A. WILSON,
British Library, Reference Division, Great Russell
Street, London WC1.

Paisley Pattern

Sir, - Edwin Morgan's casual remark in his review of *The Concise Scots Dictionary* (May 9) that, "to get off at Paisley" means to practise coitus interruptus has led to some puzzlement.

I suggest that the phrase, but perhaps not the sexual undertones, originated as far back as 1841, when the Greenock, Paisley and Glasgow Railway was opened, providing a popular route for Highlanders into the Lowland cities, where their alien speech and manners for long excited ridicule.

The key to the apocryphic phrase in question is probably to be found in *Scottish Life and Character* by William Harvey (Aeneas Mackay, 1899), page 274: The anecdote containing it, like most others in Harvey's book, dates from much earlier than 1899.

A Highlander intending to travel by rail from Greenock to Paisley, and being afraid to leave the train at the wrong place, asked another Gael how he would know when he had arrived.
"She'll come to a big toon and she'll be thinking it's Paisley, and it's no Paisley. She'll come to another big toon and she'll think it's Paisley, but it's no Paisley either. And she'll come to another big toon and she'll think it's no Paisley, and it's Paisley all the time, and she'll come out there."

Practitioners of protracted ecstasy will perhaps see the application.

FORBES MACGREGOR,
17 Kilmarnock Road, Edinburgh.

Sir, - Does the fact that Paisley is further from Glasgow than Haymarket is from Edinburgh say something about the sexual mores of the respective cities?

CATHERINE SCHWARTZ,
W. and R. Chambers Ltd, 43-5 Annandale Street,
Edinburgh.

Sir, - I had never heard the phrase "to get off at Paisley" before, but as a Catholic, born and raised in Paisley, I now perhaps begin to understand the peculiar aura of angst which seemed to surround my co-religionists there.

BRIAN AUSTIN,
Norrnerind 14, Eriksberg, Sweden.

Stocking the Supplements

Sir, - I wonder if your readers would be interested in the difficulty I have had in obtaining the *TLS* from my public library since the end of January?

As a parent and children's book reviewer I have to buy the *TES*; and I read the *TLS* each week in the library. When the Wapping disputes began, the Haringey Council banned not only the four newspapers produced at Wapping, but the *Times* Supplements as well. The central issue is one of censorship, it seems to me; with the subsidiary issue of gratuitously banning the Supplements, which are not produced at Wapping.

For two months I had trouble obtaining the *TES* locally, but I was able to get it by postal subscription, and a *TLS*-reading friend outside London posted useful pages to me. Now I can once more get the *TES* from my newsagents, and I read the *TLS* in an academic library.

I could not leave it there, even though I managed to supply my own wants, without writing letters to persons of responsibility, such as the Chief Librarian, and the Leader of the Council (Bernie Grant). I did not expect that they would rescind the decision they made on political grounds, and so in addition to complaining of censorship I suggested that the Supplements *either* be exempted from the ban, or bought on the same basis as *The Times*, that is, one copy for the Central Library to be stock-piled, and made available to members of the public after the dispute is over. This minimum demand was refused in March, but last month they wrote to me again to say that they would now stock one copy of each Supplement on that basis. A minor victory!

The current action could escalate to further cases of barning, such as books printed on non-union presses. Furthermore, councils and librarians banning these newspapers are breaking the Library Association's Code of Professional Conduct, and disobeying Labour NEC instructions. This could set a dangerous precedent for Tory councils who wanted to ban "left-wing" material.

I have written to *Index on Censorship* asking them to report the banning of the *TLS* - which I suppose would be headline news if it had happened in a foreign country! I wrote to Richard Luce, Minister for the Arts, whose secretary acknowledged my letter with a copy of the press release of May 23 in which Mr Luce is said to be charging a dozen authorities with breaking the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act.

I wonder if *TLS* subscribers in these authorities, even if they buy their own copies, will also make a stand against public library censorship? Maybe the cause of the print-workers is just - but this is the wrong way to fight it.

JESSICA YATES,
14 Norfolk Avenue, South Tottenham, London N15.

'Buildings for Music'

Sir, - J. E. Garrod (Letters, June 6) has not got it quite right. The Russian copy of the Vauxhall Gardens was not in Moscow but near Leningrad, at Pavlovsk, two miles from Tsarskoe Selo, where the Tsar had a palace. Russia's first railway line, opened in 1837, was a fourteen-mile stretch from St Petersburg, as it then was, to Tsarskoe. This was extended to Pavlovsk when the "Vauxhall" Gardens were opened. The citizens of St Petersburg would tell their coachmen and cab-drivers "Vauxhall" and be driven to the station where they took the train for Pavlovsk. Later, when the line to Moscow was built, the station for Moscow in St Petersburg got known as the "Moscow Vauxhall", and so *vokzal* became the accepted word for railway station.

A. K. MILNE,
Springfield Farm, Buckhorn Weston, Gillingham,
Dorset.

The journal *Christianity and Literature* is published by Baylor University, Texas, for the Conference on Christianity and Literature, and, out, as stated by Donald Dave in his article "God in recent poetry" (May 23), by Notre Dame University, which publishes the journal *Rational and Literature*.

Social Issues

Losing the Fight Against Crime

RICHARD KINSEY,
JOHN LEA
and JOCK YOUNG

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COMMENTARY

Small-scale settings

Richard Osborne

GIUSEPPE VERDI
Simon Boccanegra
Glyndebourne Festival Opera

There was a time when Glyndebourne and Salzburg did what they are equipped to do superbly well, judging in a nicely the works likely in the best served by their artistic and physical resources. Nowadays their touch seems less sure. In Salzburg, as Sir Peter Hall tartly noted in a diary entry of August 11, 1979, the new Grosses Festspielhaus has been a mixed blessing. Describing the new house as a "fanciest palace", Sir Peter went on to ask how it is possible to stage Mozart with even a modicum of dramatic credibility in a house that seats over two thousand people.

This prejudice in favour of smaller theatres is a healthy one where Mozart is concerned. With *Simon Boccanegra*, however, the reverse argument holds. In the unlikely event of Salzburg's musical supremacy flying into Glyndebourne this summer to see this production, "village-hall Verdi" – or some such phrase – is what we might expect to read in some future edition of the *Kamran diaries*. Not that there is anything wrong with village-hall Verdi or village-hall Wagner when Britten is the exemplary go-between (as Hall's brilliant production of *Albert Herring* at Glyndebourne shows); but rarely has a late, great Verdi opera been so trusted up or so obviously emulated as *Simon Boccanegra* is in this new production. Its constituent elements – powerful music, robust singing, lustrous sets – fruitlessly vying with one another for a decent share of *Lebensraum*. Even the Glyndebourne acoustic, so brilliant a purveyor of the *Falstaff* sound, is against *Boccanegra*. Short on resonance and real depth of tone, the dry acoustic robs the music of a good deal of its gloomy beauty, blanching it of its peculiar and all-pervasive *aura*.

Visually, this *Boccanegra* may look better on tour, re-lit in altogether larger theatres. The Council Chamber has a certain grandeur. The massing of the proletariat is boldly done, as in Amelia's sudden, distracted entry midway through the scene. The Doge's study, in Act Two, is John Gunter's simplest design and in some ways his most effective. Earlier, the lucidly expository Prologue (the opening as casually conversational as the opening of *King Lear*) is murkily staged behind an intrusive gauze; and the seaside garden setting for Act One, though blessed with pretty vistas, is itself rather plain and the stage is, for no very obvious reason, awkwardly raked. The singers look ill-at-ease on it, not least Boccanegra (Timothy Noble), stumbling over the creaking boards, his considerable girth made the more

nnple by a good deal of costuming.

Hall has had a long-standing fascination with the quasi-Shakespearean elements in *Simon Boccanegra*. The late-Shakespearean sea symbolism is an irrelevant read into the Verdi here but the great confrontation scenes which dominate the opera have a power that might be further concentrated by careful direction in a small house. In this sense a Glyndebourne *Boccanegra* is not wholly implausible. What is baffling about the production is how little Hall appears to have done with it. The acting, where it is not downright poor, often seems directionless. "In *Forza* the characters are ready-made", Verdi noted in a letter to Giulio Ricordi in 1880, "in *Boccanegra* you have to make them." In this respect, Robert Lloyd Fiesco is superbly made, his every utterance intelligently and compellingly phrased. John Rawnsley's Paolo is also notable, though some detail seems otiose (the amused finger-twiddling better suited to the comic machiavel in an *open buffa*) and the suggestion of Paolo's relaxed, amused response to Boccanegra's great simonians and curse at the end of the Council Chamber scene seems misplaced. The *disposizione scenica*, published by Ricordi in 1881, gives an entirely different reading to the scene. No one nowadays expects slavish adherence to the 1881 production book (Hall is, in fact, quite close to it in places) but if so closely chronicled a characterization is to be jettisoned one looks for something more interesting or authoritative in its place.

Carol Vancas is a bright, purposeful Amelia, though hardly the convent girl of Verdi's imagining, and another victim of onflattering costume design. The young Corsican tenor, Tiberio Raffalli, is ardent in Act One but lacks granuleur of voice, a proper baritone thrust, in the big Rigoletto-like scene in Act Two, which is always a difficult scene to bring off powerfully in the wake of the 1881 addition of the Council Chamber sequence. Timothy Noble's Boccanegra is generous to a fault, both physically and vocally, better as Boccanegra the burly Falstaffian pirate-king than as the doomed ruler Verdi puts before us in this powerful but elusive work.

Two recent opera bibliographies are *Concert and Opera Singers: A bibliography of bibliographical materials*, compiled by Robert H. Cowden (278pp. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, distributed by Westport Publications, 3 Henrietta Street, London WC2E 8LU. £35. 0 313 24828 1) and *Opera and Concert Singers: An international bibliography of books and pamphlets*, compiled by Andrew Farkas (363pp. New York: Garland Publishing. \$50. 0 8240 9001 2). Both books provide annotated alphabetical lists of over 700 singers.

One man's myth

Oliver Taplin

EURIPIDES
Medea
Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith

It seems that the *Medea* is the message in London this year. There was a production at the Gate in March in a new translation by David Wiles, and a new version by Jeremy Brooks at the Young Vic in April. Now at the Lyric, Hammersmith, it is the turn of the old Penguin translation by Philip Vellacott (1963). So what's new in a play from 431 BC? That myths were made by men to confirm male prejudices – though his chorus's claim that Medea reverses this bias is not altogether by Euripides. And there is a racial colouring, brought out at the Young Vic by setting Eileen Atkins in a city of black Corinthians. Both these points are mildly present at the Lyric, where Madhur Jaffrey wears a Nehru-type coat and leggings and speaks accented English, and where those of rank are pompous posers to a man. The production's emphasis is, rather, on morbid psychology. Medea has nasty noises in her head – the strongest dramatic effects are recorded on tape. And yet this is one of the world's most calculated murders: there is nothing inherently mad about taking revenge.

There is a better production struggling to break out of the limitations of this one, which as it stands lacks firm shape or sense of purpose. There is little differentiation of dramatic register – in particular the music comes and goes at odd moments without enhancing meaning (canned music has never in my experience been better than live for Greek tragedy). The costumes are more evocative of *Star Trek* than anything else. The stage-space consists of random balconies and boxes. It conveys no sense, for example, of Medea's being trapped in her

house, able to strike out only through using her children as angels of death, until she finally stuns the groundling men by going "through the roof" and away. But, above all, the actors strive again and again for some strong language, something ear-catching, some poetry to get their teeth into. Greek tragedy in stilted yet mildly colloquial English is like a sea-eagle coated in an oil-slick.

Potentially good performances, for example by Robert Reynolds as the Messenger, never really take wing. In some ways the best is by Lynn Farleigh as the solo "chorus", marble-white and cool, who, despite having no music or metre, makes the play's lyrics worth listening to. The finest moment is perhaps her delivery of the Larkin-like sentiment that sensible people do not have children: after all the anxiety of bringing them up, "then what happens? A throw of chance – and there goes Death, bearing off your child into the unknown." These are words to chill any parent; in this play, however, they are aimed at the hearts of fathers. If you hand your children over to your wife and yet wrong your wife, you must not be surprised to find that the children have been alienated, taken away, destroyed.

One can only hope that this potentially strong production gains an increased sense of significance, for *Medea* is alive and pressing.

These words from a women's chorus at least 2000 years before us weren't much heeded, but since what they sang then should still be listened to by men a translation's needed . . .

These lines come near the end of Tony Harrison's as yet unperformed libretto for the Metropolitan Opera, *Medea, a war Opera*. The sex war, which like the wars conducted between men inspires atrocities, remains urgent and unresolved.

The threat of the moment

Duncan Wu

JOHN OSBORNE
The Enterpriser
Shaftesbury Theatre

While the design of Robin Lefèvre's new production of *The Enterpriser* retains its 1950s setting – the depressingly authentic furniture, lampshades and embroidered tablecloth – it is inescapably of the 1980s. John Osborne has restored to some of the earlier jokes deleted by the Lord Chamberlain's Office thirty years ago: the nude tableau is now visibly topless and Archie ostentatiously plays pocket-billiards.

Peter Bowles as Archie Rice, the exhausted and drained music-hall comedian, revises our notions of this soulless character. He plays Archie with a hypnotic leer and a smoker's cough as he gazes out over his red bow-tie at the audience, stretching his face to the extremes of its range. In a smooth pink suit he sways on his long, gangly legs like a puppet – all the time affecting the cultivated cheekiness and rapid-fire delivery of a music-hall comedian. It is an energetic performance; perhaps too energetic for a man described by his creator as "very tired and old".

But one feels no reservations about the climax at the end of Act Two, when the sentiment which threatens to mope Osborne's text is overcome by the sincerity of the playing. Bowles pushes Archie beyond the compulsive routines which mark his usual behaviour towards a self-awareness that gives him an almost tragic stature. At the end of the scene he and his daughter (Joanne Pearce) stand alone, spotlight, as he forces her again and again down to the front of the stage until they are at the footlights, looking out at the auditorium. The threat of the moment, as these "characters out of something that nobody believes in" step out of their fiction, is still strong. Osborne concludes the scene with the news that Mick, the family's war-hero, has been killed to Suez. During the silence that follows, the impassiveness of Bowles's face confirms Archie's description of himself ("dead and smug and used up . . . I don't feel a thing"), until he sinks to

his knees and sings a negro spiritual. It remains a powerful, even daring moment of theatre. In the third act, the play never quite regains its momentum. The impact of the death of Archie's father, Billy Rice which has been so long anticipated, is thrown away, and the sudden appearances of Archie's brother and the upwardly mobile career man, Graham Dodd, weaken Osborne's structure. But the production benefits from a fine supporting cast, who play the text with enormous energy.

The Suez Crisis encapsulated, for Osborne, in 1957, the decay of "the heart of England" in a way that still speaks its anger clearly. *The Enterpriser* is a lament for a former England which (as represented by Billy Rice) was humane and caring. The selfishness of the emerging consumer age – of which the handling of Suez was a symptom – is what has drained Archie, making him despairing and bitter ("Number one's the only one for me", he sings with intentional irony). Those words, a potent warning in 1957, now seem more like a reflection of what we have become.

The most recent titles in Methuen's *Writer Files* series, which aims to provide background information on the work of major dramatists, are *Stoppard* by Malcolm Page (96pp. 0 413 57280 3), *O'Casey* by Nesta Joyce (96pp. 0 413 53650 5), *Sirindberg* by Michael Meyer (61pp. 0 413 55020 6) and *Chekhov* by Nick Worrall (96pp. 0 413 53740 4). Each book contains a checklist of the plays, with performance histories and extracts from reviews, a selection from the playwright's writings about his works, a chronology of his life and work and an annotated bibliography. *Writer Files* are £3.50 each. Already published are volumes on *Arden*, *Beckett*, *Wesker*, *Ibsen* and *Tennessee Williams*.

Two recent volumes in Macmillan's *Modern Dramatists* series are *August Strindberg* £15, paperback £4.95. 0 333 29266 9) and *French Theatre 1918-1939* by Bettina L. Knapp (193pp. 0 333 37258 1), which covers the plays of Tristan Tzara, André Breton, Antonin Artaud, Jean Cocteau, Jean Giraudoux, Jean Anouilh and Paul Claudel.

Blowing from the south-east

Graham Bradshaw

PATRICK WHITE/RICHARD MEALE
Voss
Sydney Opera House

"If *The Tree of Man* is concerned with the body of Australian life, then *Voss* is concerned with the spirit of it", Ted Hughes once observed of what are probably still Patrick White's best-known novels. Hughes explained:

One way to look at it is as if every Australian were a walking Australia – with all its rocks, lizards, colours, temperatures, distances, fat farms, and starving blackfellows somewhere inside him. Then the average Australian lives happily and unthinkingly, in his mind's wealthy, flourishing margin and sociable south-east corner, that conscious and well-developed part of himself which corresponds to the fertile margin and well-populated south-east corner of Australia. But what about the vast, unexplored challenging regions of his mind and soul?

The basis for that richly natural symbolic contrast is established at the start of the Australian Opera's first Australian opera, composed by Richard Meale with an exceptionally imaginative and powerful libretto by the poet and novelist David Malouf. A violent, nervous upward rush from the orchestra culminates in Voss's cry: "I will cross this country from one side to the other. I mean to know it with my heart. It is mine by right of vision." Whereupon a piano on stage launches into a tinkling 1845 quadrille, "La Sydney": the Bonners' party is in progress, and Voss is being patronized by confident colonials and their crinoline counterparts, who take for granted "rights" which have nothing to do with "vision".

The sense of period is exact, for White based Voss's journeying on Ludwig Leichhardt's ill-fated expedition of 1845. After including three such quadrilles, the first act finishes with a splendid coup – when Voss's cry, "Let's make a show of it!", launches an eruptive orchestral arrangement of "Dr Leichhardt's March". As Meale assembles these contrasts in the first act, there are times when they seem in danger of becoming a clever device which might wear thin. But in the second act the more subtle inter-weaving of period music with music of a quite different character becomes as dramatically charged as, say, the use of a Victorian hymn to represent the flagellation of Christ in the *Vesali* *Icons* of Peter Maxwell Davies (whom Meale evidently admires). The rustle of crinolines merges with ghostly desert noises and the rasp of stone and thorn, "this country" becomes a country of the mind.

For while Voss's self-destructive journeying is both internalized and actualized to the expedition, that of Laura Trevelyan – the "wife" he meets only briefly, and who remains to Sydney – is wholly inward. The problem for the librettist, composer and director is that of recreating, in musical-dramatic terms, the novel's counterpointing of these two inland explorations, and its charting of a destructive creative communion within some realm beyond the dimensions of space and time.

AUTHOR, AUTHOR

Competition No 283

Readers are invited to identify the sources of the three quotations which follow and to send us the answers so that they reach this office not later than July 11. A prize of £20 is offered for the first correct set of answers received on that date. The solution and results will appear on July 18.

1 "Oh not said the populations
Gloating out of bed into slippers,
"What lovely weather!
Today is Sunday!"

2 The sky dressed in the sound of Sunday colours
The season (fall of Antiquities and Philomenas),
The trains (picturesque destinations) inland,
The girls (white as their prayer-books) are released,
Riddle to lavender and thyme
From incense back to houses where
Their white planes cool each thirty square.

3 Down the road someone is practicing scales,
The notes like little fishes vanish with a wink of tails,
Mark's heart expands to think with his ear
For this is Sunday morning. Fate's great bazaar.

Competition No 279
Winner: S. J. Dodsworth

Malouf's libretto is subtle, poetic, and also structurally taut in its accentuation of this contrapuntal development. The characterization of the two protagonists (superbly sung, and acted, by Geoffrey Chard and Marilyn Richardson) is necessarily complex. Some lesser characters are sacrificed or consigned to a chorus, others (like the Bonners) are deftly characterized in economic cameos or through tellingly dramatic contrasts – as when the first, physically constrained yet ardent duet of Voss and Laura is immediately followed by that of Tom and Belle, who hold and kiss each other as they exchange the well-charted sentiments of a "normal" south-easterly love. Above all, Malouf realized that he could "dissolve the questions of spatial separation" by "treating the stage as an arena, in which Sydney and the Centre are equally present and visible at all times".

To this crucial development both the Director, Jim Shorman, and the set designer, Brian Thompson, prove responsive. Long-range parallels and disconcerting superimpositions carry constant reminders that "this country" is, in Hughes's words, "geographically the oldest, and yet from a human point of view the most novel". So, in Act Two, the raised disc which has been covered with red plush as the Bonners' party table is spread with branches for a fire and circled with stones; more unnervingly, the aboriginals who stamp their feet before spearing Palfreyman recall the Bonners' dancing guests. And more complex meanings emerge as we see how the lovers are with, or against, each other. Voss's rejection of Judd's meal is also a rejection of the humanizing of a love which challenges his obsession – and we see Laura, as he does. In the climax of the nightmare of dissolution and discovery, when the aboriginal Jacky saws off Voss's head, Jacky is supported not by the tribal elders (as in the novel) but by Laura herself – who crosses the stage from her Sydney sick-bed to become Voss's vengeful, supplanting *antithesis*, guiding the knife.

The novel's protracted coda is also brilliantly compressed in a manner reminiscent of *Wozzeck*: after Voss's death a powerfully extended orchestral postlude leads into a scene with children playing Blind Man's Bluff. "Blind man tell us, who we are", chant the children. "The air will tell us", Laura sings, when left alone after her exchange with the callow reporter. "Ah yes", says the reporter, "a country with future. But when does that future become the present?" "Now", Laura replies:

Now. Now. Every moment
that we live, and breathe, and love
and suffer. Now. Now.

From the Bonner point of view, "this country" is nearly two hundred years old. Near the opera house, inside a beautifully proportioned church designed by the coovict architect Greenway, is a plaque commemorating the ornithologist who was "spared by blacks" on Leichhardt's expedition – and next to that, another plaque, paying tribute to an aboriginal guide called "Jackey".

Answers:

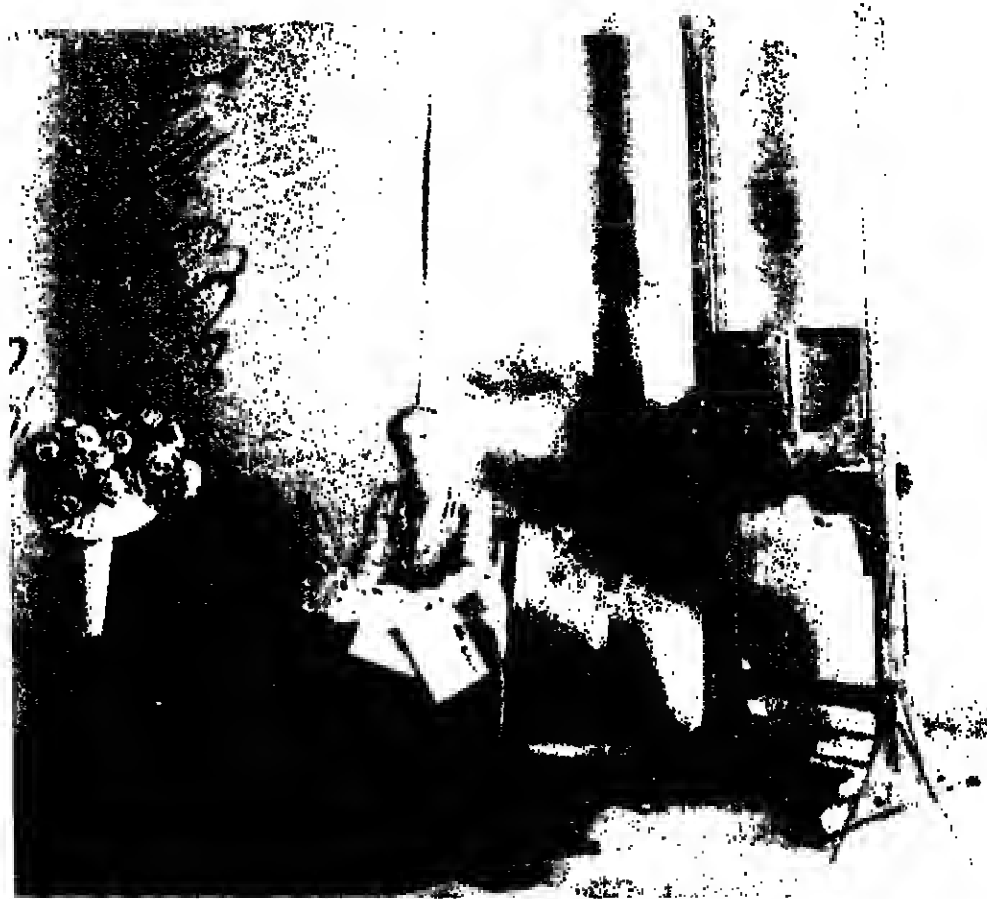
1 There were fountains of butterflies that flew glittering into the trees; there were pillars of coloured fires that rose and turned into eagles, or sailing ships, or a phalanx of flying swans; there was a red thunderstorm and a shower of yellow rain; there was a forest of silver spears that sprang suddenly into the air with a yell like an embattled army, and came down again into the water with a hiss like a hundred hot snakes.

2 J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, book 1, chapter 1.
3 They were all gone: the squibs and Catherine-wheels which Mrs Ingleside had hoarded so jealously from before the War; all my own purchases from Omega's – the Golden Fountain, the Jack-in-the-box, the Italian Streamer – there they lay, what remained of them, scattered over the street and garden: blackened burned out bits of cardboard, their brief moment of glory already half-forgotten. Jocelyn Brooke, *A Mine of Serpents*, part 1, chapter 7.

3 "I saw Rajahs and elephants with gold and silverappings; and they lit all the fireworks and set, whereby eleven men were killed, my firework-maker among them."

Rudyard Kipling, *Kim*, chapter 7.

COMMENTARY



Self-portrait, 1951, reproduced from Cecil Beaton, edited by David Mellor (256pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson £18.95, paperback £9.95. 0 297 78802 2), the catalogue of the exhibition reviewed below.

Beauty and the Blitz

Lucy Ellmann

Cecil Beaton
Barbican Art Gallery, until July 20

Although much respected as a designer, diarist, and dapper dresser, Cecil Beaton is remembered primarily for his flamboyant photographs of the rich and famous: his romantic portraits of the royal family posed against Fragonard backdrops won him a knighthood. The Barbican's lavish exhibition of 700 photographs, drawings, stage designs and a few paintings daintily conveys Beaton's coquetry, versatility and occasional wit, while avoiding less satisfactory qualities (there is no sign of the antisemitic cartoon, for instance, which led to his dismissal from *Vogue* in 1938). Twenty room-settings devised by David Berthelme, relieve the monotony of the black-and-white photographs, and black-and-white costumes, with a festive display of plants, chandeliers, several types of chair, and (we are told) daily replenishments of scent.

In the catalogue, to which Hugo Vickers (Beaton's official biographer), Michael Parkin, and Stuart Morgan, among others, have contributed, John Hoole claims to be able to detect the skull beneath the skin in Beaton's photographs, but this is not easy. Instead, Beaton seems absorbed to surface detail, and in the invention of, often silly, fantasies. Stephen Tennant warned, "You may think that Cecil is listening intently to what you say. He isn't. He's counting the hairs in your nostrils as you speak". Beaton's diaries confirm his taste for shallow scrutiny (he carefully records Jean Cocteau's dirty fingernails), though also providing flashes of insight (he writes that Marilyn Monroe's exuberant high spirits will probably end in tears). Beaton's career began with caricatures, but as a photographer he had to curb the impulse to ridicule. His photomontage mockery of Mrs Mossack and her numerous dogs is a rare exception. He settles instead for a subversive use of bold backgrounds: dwarfed by the blank stretch of wall above him, the Secretary of State for Air in 1940 looks like a mouse peeking out of its hole.

By means of mirrors, Beaton shames the revelations expected of twentieth-century portraiture, as if simultaneous views of a person's front and back might provide us with psychological depth. The surface of a mirror, and its

framing, only serve to cut us off further from the face. Ford of catching himself in the mirror too, Beaton changes his image for the camera, becoming a harlequin in Venice and a hero in the Western Desert where we find him standing on top of rocks or enduring a sandstorm in army-issue knee-length shorts.

He was able to channel much of this exhibitionism into photographing important people, and into the creation of a massive photographic archive of good-looking women, encased in big folds of white transparent material (a cross between heavenly clouds and bed-sheets). The faces of his languid beauties are often obliterated by their own clothes, as in a fashion shot of two women wearing cellophane hats. Beaton noticed when "the celestial expression in the eyes suddenly became a joke shared by everyone except the sitter" and changed his style accordingly: a woman in a Digby Morton suit makes her way to the post-box through the rubble of the Blitz. His models of the 1930s had posed within Surrealist environments constructed for Beaton by Tscheltchew; but after the war they began to rough it out the street where their dreaery clothes compare (fairly) well with their drearier surroundings. In such pictures, Beaton seems to propose prettiness as a force for good in a harshly ambiguous world.

He improved with age. While a sexy Gary Cooper is treated dismissively as a plop-up object in 1931, by the 1960s Beaton more openly involves himself with the subject. He positions Kin Holtsman in front of colossal fragments of Greek sculpture to give the impression that he is being cradled by a giant in a fond embrace: Beaton's taste for artifice and anachronism for once gives way to the personal touch. Although delicately dispersed music from Walton's *Façade* and Lerner and Loewe's *My Fair Lady*, attempts to drum into us the respectability of Beaton's life and work it is Noël Coward's "I've Been to a Marvellous Party" which preys on the mind: "Dear Cecil arrived wearing armour", and the Barbican is too polite to remove it.

Beaton in Vogue, edited by Josephine Ross (240pp with 32 colour and 261 black-and-white illustrations. Thames and Hudson. £25. 0 500 01381 0), collects examples of Cecil Beaton's work for *Vogue* from the 1920s to the 1970s, and includes articles and drawings as well as photographs.

Herself as others

Laura Marcus

SUSAN DAITCH
L.C.
284pp. Virago. £10.95 (paperback, £4.50).
0860687589

It is an unusual pleasure to be able to say of a first novel not just that it is promising but that it delivers the goods. Susan Daitch's *L.C.* is an important book, in part because it works with materials that are proliferating in feminist publishing – diaries, memoirs, historical reconstructions – and, through complex novelistic strategies and acute historical imaginings, produces a form which encourages us to rethink both fiction and history.

The major part of the novel is taken up with the diary of Lucienne Crozier, a young woman living in Paris immediately before and during the 1848 revolution. The diary, whose entries vary from the elliptical to the highly detailed, records the merging of a private with a public life. Her arranged marriage does not so much disintegrate as slide from view when her husband leaves on a business trip. She begins a series of affairs, the first with the painter Delacroix, the last with the revolutionary Jean de la Tour. Her story is not important merely because she is the mistress of famous men,

however, nor is hers a sentimental education. Through Delacroix, she comes to understand and question the romantic and aesthetic idealism which motivated the revolutionary fervour of the previous generation, now transmuted into Delacroix's opaque allegorical representations. With de la Tour she meets Proudhon, becomes involved with the revolutionary 14 Juilletists and watches Paris burn. The first part of the novel ends as she prepares for exile in Algiers.

Surrounding this narrative is a double layer of contemporary historical reconstruction. Dr Willa Reinfield, an archivist and biographer, finds and translates the diary in 1968. On her death, her assistant Jane Amme discovers it and re-translates the final section, in which Lucienne is in Algiers. "Translation is a filter, there is always some refraction", Jane writes. In Willa Reinfield's version, Lucienne and the diary because she is dying; in Jane's translation Lucienne is silenced by impending arrest for her continued political activities. One hundred and twenty years of history are elided as Jane records her own story; campus revolution in Berkeley in 1968, involvement in the killing of a man who exploits countries in the name of American imperialism and rapes women for thrills, and her subsequent fugitive existence. The history of revolutions has certain constants, she asserts, not least of which is the way

in which women are both implicated and marginalized, their labours employed but their own political interests dismissed as at best secondary to the larger class struggle. Her translation Lucienne's story because it is her own.

Daitch succeeds both in producing a series of compelling narratives, and in raising central questions about the contemporary endeavour to speak for hitherto silent women. The novel's labyrinthine structure works against any simple notion of the "discovery" of a buried past; the found manuscript, that staple ingredient of archival history and of Gothic novels, cannot simply speak its own truth. The translation that takes place in *L.C.* is more than a matter of conversion from one language, or one era, to another. History is violent, and women have been involved in that violence; a woman's history cannot occupy a benign space outside wars and revolutions. 1968 is crucial to the novel because subsequent views have tried to reduce it to an outbreak of youthful frenzy. Daitch, through Jane's narrative, superimposes it on the past to show how much was at stake.

The writing is far the most part understated, but what shines through the novel is intelligence. There have been many worthy practitioners of historical fiction, and a depressing number for whom it is a romp in fancy dress. When, as in Gertrude Heyer's costumed fan-

tasies, historical authenticity is aimed for with the entrance of Beau Brummell, usually around page 100, the reader knows the game is up. Daitch is rather more subtle. Her Delacroix does not stalk through the diary entries being bohemian, lecherous or famous. Instead, through his shadowy outline and his art, Daitch interrogates the representations which are our only access to the past.

Drawings as recordings, documents of human and animal motion, a way of producing and fixing graphic memory. The pencil as a precursor of Daguerre's invention. Odalisques stretched out on divans; they are Eugène's mental daguerotypes. Erotica, chapters of. He confessed the existence of a private notebook filled with such drawings as would help him pass the hours of loneliness.

Daitch's sure tone moves effortlessly from the language of the past to that of the present, transforming romantic historical fiction and the romance of women's history in the process. Hers is a highly original first novel which could mark a new development in women's writing. *L.C.* is not concerned with that female self which, in too much recent feminist fiction, has endlessly rehearsed its traumas, twitches and comings into its own. Such sanctioned egotism is rejected in this novel, in which politics is about commitment, history is elusive but essential, and writing means learning about all that is not yourself.

Trotting into trouble

Philip Smelt

JULIAN CROFT
Their Solitary Way
75pp. Angus and Robertson £6.95.
0207150664

Julian Croft's *Their Solitary Way* is described as a novel, but it is more like a collection of short stories. A note at the beginning says that some of the "stories" have already appeared in other publications. This explains why, in the final chapter, Raymond and Inge are introduced as if for the first time: "He is tall, with wavy sandy hair, a face with deep folds and an awkward stance. She is thin, slight, blonde, with a narrow face and a small mouth." In fact, *Their Solitary Way* concentrates on these two travellers from the first page of the first chapter. Their globe-trotting takes them from Mauritius to South America and back to Australia to thirteen junks in which the exotic scenery falls to compensate for the thin development of plot and character.

Raymond, an Australian, and Inge, a Swiss girl, form an uneasy partnership and travel around the world bickering and sulking, with Raymond eager to settle down and start a family, and Inge understandably hesitant about pursuing what seems like a lost cause. Their unhappiness is reflected by political events in

some of the countries they visit, beginning with their original meeting in Greece under the Cretans' military régime, through the Brazilian civil war and Allende's Chile. Sometimes the connection is helpfully explained. In Chile, for example, "He saw himself as the Government; she was the Opposition." And the general point is rammed home at Kew Gardens: "It's the symbolic world," she said. "It's all around us. You can't beat it."

Authorial interpretation wins hands down in one story in which an unnamed character, presumably intended to be Raymond, is attracted to a female impersonator who is recovering from an unhappy love affair with a woman. Raymond sets out the situation: "I would have made love to a man who's in love with a woman who almost fell in love with a woman who's a man." A modest storyteller might have let the matter drop there, but Croft continues, "that grotesquerie . . . is straight from the shadows which lurk behind the reality of human conversation".

The short-story form prevents any elaboration of this mysterious observation, like the other stories, this one remains a haphazard assortment of stranded impressions.

"I am extremely irritated by all the printer's errors", James Joyce wrote to Harriet Weaver of the first edition of *Ulysses*, adding that he hoped they would not be perpetuated in future editions. Until the three-volume critical and synoptic edition edited by Hans Walter Gabler (New York: Garland, 1984) they were. The text of this new edition of *Ulysses* is now available to the general reader, in hardback (£60pp, Bodley Head, £18, 0 370 30737 2) and paperback (£60pp, Penguin, £7.50, 0 14 010000 8); a "student edition" is published by Penguin at £10.95 (ISBN: 0 14 008427 4). An estimated 5,000 corrections have been made ranging from commas inserted or deleted to whole lost sentences recovered. In his review of the American edition in the TLS of July 13, 1984, Hugh Kenner gave an example of the amendments the new text contains, with reference to the scene in which Leopold Bloom wonders what it would be like to be blind:

How on earth did he know that van was there? Must have felt it. See things in their forehead perhaps kind of sense of volume. Weight or shape of it; something blacker than the dark. Wonder would he feel it if something was removed.

"Joyce wrote that," said Kenner, "a typesetter typed it; then a typesetter in Dillman scanned it. For a French-aye English upper-class W is a bandy checkpoint . . . So the Dillman compositor set a string that ended with 'Weight'. He then re-entered at the wrong 'W' and continued from 'would he feel it', producing the garbled 'Weight would be feel it if something was removed': ten words skipped."

Wired to the war

Anne Haverty

NICKY EDWARDS
Mud
187pp. Women's Press. £8.95.
0704328828

Nicky Edwards's novel finds common ground in the mud of the Flanders fields of the First World War and the mud of Greenham Common, littered with shreds of knitting and babies' shoes, the symbols of peace. It is based on the fellowship between an infantryman, John Gower, and Jo, a Greenham woman and lesbian feminist.

After a year at Greenham, Jo has returned to the solitary life of a writer in London. The glow from togetherness, days in the open air and nights in her "bender", and the heady mix of purpose and moral superiority, have worn off but she hardly knows, or dares to say, the reason why. Through some desultory research for her play on the First World War, she meets Ada, widow of John who died in the trenches in that long-ago. It is an unlikely friendship between this elderly woman who belongs to the world of afternoon cribbage and the one o'clock pensioners' club, and Jo, who is a member, if somewhat disaffected, of the tribe of "lesbian-feminist vegetarian cat-owning young self-propelled dole-drawing ramblers". But

Ada carries her own brand of radicalism lightly, and Jo is not bent on imposing hers. The ambivalence in what appear to be a black-and-white issue of war versus peace emerge. Ada, for instance, worked in a munitions factory during the war. The women who claim the radical core of brick-chucking suffragettes as their foremothers, reject bricks themselves. The pacifist demonstration at Greenham Common, in inviting confrontation, might be seen as a war in itself – and Jo's dilemma over how to reply to that confrontation is central to the novel. She discovers that for her the symbolic attitude of pacifism is no longer possible. If there was "a violent answer to male violence on a nuclear level" she would use it. The implications of this realization are awful but pertinent.

This debate is woven skilfully into the narrative. Jo has a love affair which makes way for a wry evocation of the right-on lesbian-feminist culture of Notting Hill; John's very significant wartime diary comes to light; and his hapless ghost follows Jo on her researches. He is kept firmly in his place but this dead soldier and Jo share much, apart from their regard for Ada. It is perhaps a pity that the larger issues of his war and the women's stand on Greenham Common are not explored at greater length. The conclusion on life after Greenham is pessimistic, even hopeless; but this is an important debut for Nicky Edwards.

A right royal rumpus

Christopher Hawtree

HILARY MANTEL
Vacant Possession
293pp. Chatto and Windus. £9.95.
0701130474

Crisis engenders worse crisis throughout this sequel to Hilary Mantel's first novel, *Every Day is Mother's Day*, so much so that, long before the end, its characters look back down the vista of years and regard those grim events of 1774 with some nostalgia.

One knew where one was in those days. The lines were clearly marked out. They remained distinct, even when transgressed by Colin Sidney, a disillusioned schoolmaster, whose adulterous affair with a social worker drew him towards one of her "cases", a strange pair of biddies, mother and daughter, ensconced in a dark suburban house in Buckingham Avenue. Although recapitulated here, the way in which Colin and his family came to occupy the house should not be revealed, for the original succession of neatly juxtaposed scenes leaves one torn between horror and delight at the unfolding, malevolent design.

The title of the sequel – on the surface one of an estate agent's less devious expressions – comes to mean its very opposite. The apparent good fortune in being relocated brings with it problems less tractable than those encountered during endless weekends of recalcitrant DIY and unruly children. Early on, Lizzie Blank, the "daddy", a frightful crone, returns to her lodgings and, beneath the accretion of coarse make-up and garish clothes, is revealed to be Muriel Axon, whose late mother herself once occupied the Buckingham Avenue house.

Now, Bateman dead and York Minster ablaze, Collo's mind ranges over the past. "Change was in the air, an undercurrent of disturbance. He couldn't account for it." More than the onset of middle age and the reflection that "courtisans are faded, schoolmasters are neatly worn", the change is a one that affects them all, survivors from 1974 and those now drawn in. Among the newcomers are Muriel's friend, Emmanuel Crisp, "who liked to pretend he was a vicar, and who got put away for it", and Francis Teller, a goulash vicar – after fashion. "Despite his pacifist outlook, he was given to khaki clothing of military provenance; to ribbed sweaters with elbow patches; to epaulettes and complex trousers with pleated

pockets buttoned on the thigh". As the novel progresses, the newcomers are joined by Colin's mother whose years in a near-coma have left her with royal delusions of such intensity that her son finds himself feverishly assuming the role of Edward VIII. It is a tactic which has been expounded by one of the nurses at the hospital – "named not for St Luke, the physician, but for the tax collector, St Matthew".

what do we care who she thinks she is? If we can say to her, turn on your side, Your Highness, while I put this cream on your bottom, that's a sight better than having her over, a dead weight.

Vacant Possession adds weight to the theory. While blurring the distinctions, it remains sharp, not least in the dialogue, so that bleak, even black, as it is, one remains convinced that there is little to choose between, *inter alia*, the mind of a busy arsonist and that of the architect of one such motorway link and the arbiters of the Welfare regulations who "scampered about with paper cups of coffee; light-footed and glowing in their seersucker flying suits and their rainbow-coloured trainers". If this is the vision of England inspired by Mrs Manel's life in the Middle East, one is eager for the process to be reversed.

Into cyberspace

Colin Greenland

WILLIAM GIBSON
Count Zero
269pp. Gollancz. £9.95.
0575036966

"The Wig sat on the beach at Cannes for two years, ingesting only the most expensive designer drugs and periodically flicking on a tiny Hosaka television to study the bloated bodies of dead Africans with a strange and curiously innocent intensity." William Gibson observes the finesse of corruption in a future where rampant technologies of telecommunication and pharmacology cater to a limitless greed. His style is deadpan and precise, with the tone of the classic crime thriller: canny, cool and unadorned, yet ultimately the very opposite of the callousness it imitates, because motivated by a desire for justice.

The Wig, as we may surmise from the above fragment, is responsible for the dead Africans, a side-effect of the computer fraud which has secured his wealth. He is a minor character in *Count Zero*, and his real name is Wigan Ladgate. Gibson has a knack for these baroque excesses of the form.

Gibson's first novel, *Neuromancer* (1984), an agreeably hectic caper, was honoured with the three major science fiction awards. It provided the same adrenalin verve and random pyrotechnics as contemporary SF cinema, managing at the same time to be intellectually substantial. Gibson acknowledges the influence not so much of Alfred Bester (whose futuristic thrillers caused similar excitement thirty years ago) or Philip K. Dick, but of Robert Stone, Thomas Pynchon and early Len Deighton.

Count Zero shows a conscientious broadening of scope and modulation of tone without any loss of brio. Since feminism, and the efforts of writers such as Ursula K. Le Guin to humanize the genre, it has not been necessary for the characters of "tough guy" SF to be either tough or guys. Gibson here gives us, in alternating chapters, the separate but convergent stories of three very different denizens of his "sexy dystopia": Count Zero himself, alias Bobby Newmark, an aspiring but touchingly dim

young computer-crook; Marley Krushkhova, a Paris art dealer whose career is in ruins after her attempt to sell a fake foisted on her by her unscrupulous lover; and Turner, a mercenary in industrial espionage, a tough guy (as his mononym indicates) whose latest assignment will lead him away from taciturn violence in reconciliation with his past and the values of domesticity and peace. Each is summarily overtaken by an enigma that requires dedicated pursuit and precipitates personal change, enabling Gibson to add degrees of emotional warmth and subtlety to his range of description.

The complexity of his plot sufficiently indicates the complexity of this world, whose thrones and dominions are not always to be found where one might look for them. All the power and all the money are ostensibly with the zaibatsu, supranational industries that demand tribal allegiance and function like huge predatory organisms. "The blood of a zaibatsu", says a character in Gibson's short story "New Rose Hotel", "is information, not people. The structure is independent of the individual lives that comprise it." Politics has mutated into economics, and that into cybernetics. It is an economy of information, and therefore of secrecy. Everything runs on credit, in both senses: the fiscal (cash is conventionally reserved for illicit transactions) and the fiducial (any system of knowledge rests upon a system of belief). The machinery of communications can be used to make people believe things. The fictions computers generate become real. In *Count Zero* as in *Neuromancer*, many computers require their operators to work in an illusory "cyberspace", a landscape of gleaming towers of data where security programs offer physical violence. Money is a consensual fiction, and holographic recording, psychactive chemicals and cyborganic surgery are commonplace. Ambiguity is rife, reality elusive. Hence the "curious innocence" of the Wig, who can avoid the genocidal consequences of his rapacity by the touch of a key. It is significant that the thief's methods and motives are indistinguishable from those of the corporations from whom he steals. Gibson notes: "Burgeoning technologies require outlaw zones. Moral certainty is concealed in the lurid shadows; genuine humanity is to seek. Down these mean streets a man must go.

Criminal proceedings

T. J. Binyon

KEN FOLLETT
Like Down with Linn
263pp. Hamish Hamilton. £8.95.
0 241 11688 0

French doctor Jean-Pierre and his radical American girlfriend Jane go to Afghanistan to give medical aid to the insurgent tribesmen. Jane has a baby, Chantal. Her former lover, Ellis Thaler, turns up and turns out to be a CIA agent who has been sent to try and bring the separate resistance groups together. Also involved are a KGB colonel, Anatoli, and a strong supporting cast of Afghan tribesmen. Long, carefully researched, intermittently highly exciting, with great scenery; all in all certainly more convincing than Ken Follett's last novel, *The Man from St. Petersburg*. But the author takes an old-fashioned view of family psychology, and Jane, who seems to derive her character as well as her name from the old strip cartoon, is a hard act to swallow.

PATRICIA MOVES
Night Ferry to Death
182pp. Collins. £7.50.
0 00 21438 X

Chief Superintendent Henry Tibbett and his wife Emmy are returning by night ferry from a holiday in Amsterdam. All the cabins are booked, so they have to pig it in the saloon. Who they wake up at Harwich, one of their neighbours doesn't. Mr Smith, a shifty-looking little man who is – as Henry later learns – carrying a consignment of stolen diamonds, has had his cubit made with a bare bodkin. Slowish and old-fashioned, but none the worse for that, and it's pleasing to see that Tibbett is still holding out against retirement.

TIM HEALD
Red Herrings
188pp. Macmillan. £7.50.
0 333 39893 9

Tim Heald's comic hero, Board of Trade special investigator Simon Bognor, and his wife Muriel happen to be staying in the village of Herring St George as guests of a tycoon in the mail order lingerie business, when the body of a VAT inspector is discovered, more full of arrows than St Sebastian, in a local wood. Aided – or obstructed – by Monica and Chief Inspector the Earl of Rotherhithe, Bognor buckles down and clears up a very unsavoury mess of pottage. Bognor is not quite as funny as his author believes him to be, but the plot works and there are some solid and knowledgeable throwbacks at contemporary food fads which make up for much.

SARA PARETSKY
Killing Orders
233pp. Gollancz. £8.95.
0 575 03754 7

Vic Warshawski, Sara Paretsky's female private eye from Chicago, is hired to investigate the theft of three million dollars' worth of share certificates from the safe of the Priory of Albertus Magnus. Which involves her with really church and some characters who play really rough: she's threatened, attacked, and her apartment is burnt out. But she rides the blows, keeps da punching and eventually nails the archbishop. She's not just a tough cookie, however: in between rounds she dandles with an English insurance broker and she always remembers to tell us what she's wearing. Fast-talking, with good Chicago detail, but not overly convincing as a story.

Dying and undying

John Clute

LUCIUS SHEPARD
Green Eyes
275pp. Chatto and Windus. £9.95 (paperback, £3.95).
0701130334

An inchoate profusion of iden and anecdote chokes Lucius Shepard's first novel half to death. Taken in judicious doses, however, its parts are extraordinary, and Shepard's use of voodoo themes says something of interest about the current state of sophistication of science fiction in the United States.

In the near future of America, a privately financed research organization, housed in the Deep South, has succeeded in creating laboratory zombies. By injecting bacteria from a chosen graveyard into recently dead cadavers, Doctors Ezawa and Edman have managed to install new personalities in the undead. These personalities seem to concentrate in themselves certain paradigmatic aspects of what it means to be human. Some are evil, some frenetic; one is a scientist, another – the protagonist – a dark poet. All are mesmeric, all are hauntingly real, as though they were deep archetypes reborn. And indeed they are exactly that.

It is when Donnell Harrison, the Luciferian poet, escapes the institute and goes to ground in bayou country, that the novel begins to split into its parts. Shepard may know the lie of the land and the accents of its gothic inhabitants, but much of this territory is familiar to any reader of Southern American fiction; the raw impasto of Shepard's local-colourist canvas simply gums up the works of his story. With his institute girlfriend, Donnell lives to find a cure for the fatal proliferation of the bacteria, which have given him life and selfhood only to overbreed fatally, causing his eyes to turn green. Being able to read electromagnetic vibrations, he also cures the sick. He attends a revival meeting and breaks it up in a fit of hypnotic

iconoclasm. And so on.

Finally, Donnell and the faithful lisson Jocundra become embroiled with the half-insane descendant of a long-dead voodoo apparition who helps him build a voodoo (an occult focussing device made of copper) through which he controls the bacteria, travels to a harsh fantasy land, all the while becoming more and more akin to the *gros bon ange*, or primordial soul, of an entity of the voodoo pantheon. He destroys some of those who would use voodoo for ill; finds out that the institute has been itself implicated in voodoo; and dies, or finds transcendental rebirth in the analogue land of true dreams.

It is, of course, all too much. What remains is some oddly effective poetry, the fragments of a genuinely interesting exploration of biological engineering and mind-states, and the sense that there is, at least for American science fiction writers, something inherently useful in the concept of voodoo. By now it is a truism that the science fiction genre houses a strong and sometimes desperate urgency to transcend this mortal coil and to go travelling. Unlike most religions, or movements tinged with some religious aspect, voodoo is intensely pragmatic. It is a religion for those – most were originally slaves – who have to cope with an almost intolerable environment. At its heart, voodoo is an assemblage of survival lore.

For the writer interested in exploring routes to what might be called transcendent survivalism, voodoo is, therefore, rather like catnip. *Green Eyes* is neither the first nor has it been the last science fiction novel whose author has become intoxicated with that lure; several have appeared since its first publication in the United States in 1984. Perhaps it stands as a harbinger of survival treatises to come.

On Saturday July 5 a one-day conference on the life and work of Barbara Pym will be held at St Hilda's, Oxford. Further information and booking forms are available from The Conference Organizer, Barbara Pym Conference, St Hilda's College, Oxford OX4 1DY.

LibertyPress

ORIGINS OF THE COMMON LAW

By Arthur R. Hogue

First published in 1966 by Indiana University Press Arthur R. Hogue's *Origins of the Common Law* looks at the deep meditative roots of our legal system during the early formative period of the common law. Between 1154 and 1307, from the reign of Henry II to that of Edward I, common law experienced a spectacular growth as a legal system enforced in the English Royal Courts. Paraphrasing Professor Hogue: in the form of writs, judicial decisions, treatises, royal ordinances, and parliamentary statutes, the common law, in large part the definition of established customs, emerged into explicit written form and formal procedure to order better such ordinary relationships among Englishmen as those between landlord and tenant, merchant and money lender, and buyer and seller.

In his final chapter, "From Medieval Law to Modern Law," Hogue concludes, "The rule of law, the development of law by means of judicial precedents, the use of the jury to determine the material facts of a case, and the definition of numerous causes of action—these form the principal and valuable legacy of the medieval law to the modern law." And one might add, to the growth of the concept of liberty as well.

This thoughtful, lucid account is a work of history, not a technical legal treatise, and should be of interest to the general reader and the specialist alike.

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London Antiquarian Book Fair

H. R. Woudhuysen

The twenty-seventh Antiquarian Book Fair is to be opened on June 24 by Kenneth Baker. The 107 exhibitors from seventeen countries will have about 30,000 items on display, ranging in date from the earliest period of book production (Johann Nider's *Præceptorium divinarum legis*, Cologne not after 1472; £8,500 from Robert D. Steedman) to more recent times (Harvey Muller [Ken Price], *The Plain of Snakes: A poem cycle*, Santa Barbara 1981; £2,000 from A. B. I. Books); and in price from £15 for Goff's and Fawcett's intriguingly titled *Macedonia, A Plea for the Primitive* (1922; Piccadilly Rare Books Ltd), to £30,000 for the Batty Family collection of "Water Colours, Ink Sketches, Proof Plates, Inscribed Books, etc." (Charles W. Traylen).

This year's Fair seems particularly impressive in what it has to offer. Its exhibition is of books and memorabilia associated with Laurence Sterne, in mid of the Shandy Hall Appeal. From the dealers there are books from the East – the first Western edition of Confucius, printed in Latin at Paris in 1687, with a contemporary chinoiserie embossed cover (£3,000 from William George's Sons Ltd); and from Africa – a late seventeenth or early eighteenth-century Ethiopian manuscript of "The Story

of Mary", with about 250 paintings in the early Gondarian style (£25,000 from Colin & Charlotte Franklin); and material from the New World – the heavily revised and corrected typescript of Ezra Pound's *Our Own Form of Government* (1936), a caustic indictment of the American system (£3,000 from Bertram Rota Ltd). A selection of titles from J. B. Priestley's 7,000-volume library will be available from Robert Vaughan. There are unusual items like the *Instructions on Needle-work and Knitting* (1838), which includes miniature specimens of "a blue pinafore, baby's cap, two shirts, a sampler, and a tiny woollen sock" (£450 from Ken Spelman), and books so lavishly presented that it is hard to remember what they are, like the Sangarski & Sutcliffe manuscript (c1925) of Bacon's essay "Of Gardens" bound with "six different designs on the covers, doublets and fly-leaves of coloured onlays richly gilt, with two clasps each set with a sapphire and four pearls" (£25,000 from H. M. Fletcher). It has to be seen to be believed. There are other bindings of more restrained but equally splendid kinds: a set of V. Guerin, *La Terre Sainte*, Paris 1884, beautifully bound by Alfo (£6,000 from Jean-Philippe Geley), a less conventional abstract design by Madeline Gras on Georges Rouault's *Passion*, Paris 1939 (£9,500 from E. Joseph) and a superbly finished two-volume set from the Doves Press Bindery of the Doves

Press editions of *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* (£4,850 from Henry Sotheran Ltd).

Some items are of real literary, artistic or musical interest. There is a choice of presentation copies of Conrad's *Some Reminiscences* (1912): either an inscribed copy to Harriet Capes (£1,250 from Bell, Book & Radmall Ltd), or to Edward Thomas (£3,500 from Blackwell's Rare Books). Two of the greatest poets of the last century are available in attractive editions: it would be pleasing to have Heine's *Buch der Lieder*, Hamburg 1827 (£1,400 from A. Rosenthal Ltd), next on a shelf to Christina Rossetti's home-produced *Verses* (1847; £2,750 from Fisher & Sperr). From the 1890s Oscar Wilde presents a copy of his *Juveniles* (1891) to Robert, Earl of Lytton while in Paris (£600 from Eric T. Moore). Aubrey Beardsley provides four illustrations in their first printing to Poe's *Works* (£4,500 from Warrack & Perkins) and Max Beerholm writes a letter to the cyclostyled Hornsmond School magazine *The School Budget* (1898), enclosing a caricature of Rudyard Kipling in reply to his letter in the last issue ("its tone is quite monstrous and unpardonable") (£300 from Onby Goldscheider). It is hard to think of any other occasion (outside the auction rooms) when Karl Böhm's working copy of *Lulu* used for the 1962 Vienna performance (£4,400 from Björk & Björsson), over fifty letters from Gandhi to Herman Kallenbach written largely during his time in South Africa (£9,250 from Frank R. Thorold [Pty] Ltd), a David Jones drawing of a nude woman, 1925 (£7,500 from Barrie Marks Ltd), and a jolly good selection



Detail of an illustration by Bonnard for Ambrose Vollard's publication of Longus' Les pastorales, ou Daphnis et Chloe, Paris 1902, which includes 151 original lithographs printed by Auguste Cloc; a copy is offered for sale in the Antiquarian Book Fair, Park Lane Hotel, Piccadilly, W1.

of G. A. Heoty, including *At the Point of a Bayonet* (1902; £40 from McNaughton's Bookshop) could be available for sale under one roof.

The world at your fingertips

Nicolas Barker

A. D. BAYNES-COPE
The Study and Conservation of Globes
80pp. Vienna: Coronelli, available in the UK from Mings Bros, 50 Berkeley Square, London W1 6EL, or from the author, 2 Duke Street, Stanton, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP31 2AA, £5.

Globes, terrestrial and celestial, are among the most fascinating and problematic of artefacts. A globe consists of a sphere enclosed within two rings, the vertical meridian and the horizon circle, within each of which it must be able to move freely and revolve. Central to it is the spindle, connected to stays supporting the outer sphere (or pair of hemispheres). An elaborately built-up structure of paper, papier mâché or board covers it, the surface coated in plaster and carefully shaped to be perfectly spherical. On this are pasted the gores: willow-leaf-shaped strips, with the delineation of the earth or heavens in print or manuscript, all of which must fit exactly. The whole is covered with a transparent protective coating.

The study, and still more the conservation,

of these elaborate confections is a hard task. You cannot see inside a globe (except with special apparatus). To photograph the outside in close focus is impossible; X-ray photographs of the inside require careful interpretation. The interior structure may be wood or iron, or balanced with a bag of lead shot, all of which are liable to breakage and only retrievable with difficulty. The outside surface may be distorted, damaged, altered or dirty.

On all this A. D. Baynes-Cope is an expert. *The Study and Conservation of Globes* is full of valuable information, based on long experience, on its recondite yet captivating subject. Its author has examined more globes than anyone else, both externally and (using a medical bronchoscope) internally. His scientific and technical skill is of the highest order, combining sound chemistry with remarkable mechanical ingenuity. He is fully aware of the scholarly and geographical importance of his material and the need to preserve archival evidence. At the same time, his empiric approach is always open to the simple, common-sense remedy. He writes good clear prose, no small achievement in matters of technical detail: his account of the treatment of the great Molyneux globes in the Middle Temple is a tour de force.

Towards a new market

Tony Campbell

DAVID SMITH
Victorian Maps of the British Isles
176pp. Batsford. £30.
071344178X

Many people have taken nibbles out of Victorian mapmaking but David Smith is the first to consume the subject whole. The essay that fills two-thirds of *Victorian Maps of the British Isles* exudes in its rumbustious prose all the confidence and enthusiasm of the nineteenth-century railway engineers and financiers as they redraw the face of England, and its map with it. The catalogue of mapmakers and their products which rounds off the volume shows the complementary Victorian virtues of hard work and concern for detail.

Smith's new book is addressed to the map collector but its appeal should be far wider, since his comments are fixed firmly into the social, economic and scientific developments of the period. Aided by a good selection of illustrations – eight in colour and many of the others well-chosen details – the author explains the complexities of the new mapmaking techniques available to Victorian publishers and the varied uses they made of them. His summary is full, accurate and highly readable. Instead of the traditional "form and content" distinction, Smith orders his material under an alliterative quartet of headings: Production, Paper, Presentation and content, and Purpose. The scope and flavour of the book can be seen in the subheadings (unhelpfully omitted from the contents page). Under "Presentation" there are sections on antiquities, boundaries, colour, conventional signs, decoration, orthography and relief. Under "Purpose" the following types of maps and plans are separately considered: commercial, communication, cycling, education, enclosure, environs, estate, excursion, improvement, parish, railway, road, scientific, statistical, steamship, thematic, title, towns, transport and waterway.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, 80 per cent of the British population lived in the country, and a similar proportion had become urban dwellers by the end of it. The cartographic counterpart of that demographic revolution was that "maps printed on high-quality hand-made paper for a limited wealthy clientele had largely been replaced by a mass-production of maps on cheap machine-made paper for a mass market". Smith clearly shares

a "healthy interest in development and improvement", but his constant contrasting of the egalitarian virtues of the Victorians with those of earlier generations is irritating. Indeed, some unreformed readers may actually prefer "finely decorated, ingratiatingly dedicated town plans produced for the gentleman's library" to the "plain, heavily drawn, frequently revised, cheap maps" which replaced them.

The information Smith conveys is highly compact, with occasional historical forays, sometimes outside the British context. While less specialist readers will appreciate the book's wealth of social (and frequently amusing) detail, up-to-date bibliographies are provided for those wishing to delve deeper. It is a shame that the book is inadequately served by a confusing array of indexes. Although the general index does subdivide some categories it fails to differentiate the welter of entries under Ordnance Survey. The symbiotic relationship between the Ordnance Survey, as the information-gathering agency, and the commercial publishers who adapted its material for their own varied purposes is a constant undercurrent to the book. It is particularly deplorable that the end-notes, testifying to the author's wide command of sources, should omit page numbers.

Although the Ordnance Survey sliced across county boundaries, county maps and the atlases formed of them remained in demand. They continue to inspire modern cartographers and map collectors. These two groups are the most likely to value the partially codified information in Smith's catalogue of the works produced by thirty-four leading publishers of the period. Potential purchasers who already possess the same author's and publisher's *Antique Maps of the British Isles* (1982) can be assured that, while there is considerable overlap between the two catalogues, the *Victorian Maps* entries are far from being straight repeats of those in the earlier volume.

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JOEL H. WIENER (Editor)
Innovators and Preachers: The role of the editor in Victorian England
335pp. Greenw. £35.
0313 241643

In the past few years literary and social historians have discovered in Victorian reviews and magazines a fertile seam of enquiry. And, in the late Walter Houghton's monumental *Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals* they have been provided with a prodigiously helpful source-book. Not surprisingly, interest in the conduct as well as content of nineteenth-century journals has been burgeoning, for the two are hard to separate. It was with a view to investigating and defining the role of the Victorian editor that the fifth Conference on History and Politics was held at the City University of New York in 1985. *Innovators and Preachers*, a book derived from the Conference's proceedings, comprises fifteen papers, all of them lucid and informative, on a miscellany of Victorian editors. The book's scope is, to say the least, diverse, and ranges from familiar names like Thackeray and Leslie Stephen to such comparatively obscure figures as G. M. Reynolds, Editor of *Reynolds's Weekly*, and Thomas Wakley, first Editor of the *Lancet*. Joel Wiener, editor of this book on editing, does not pretend that the assembled papers cover every facet of Victorian editing. None the less he hopes that they will pave the way for a full-scale history of the subject.

Ironically, though, historical perspective is not among the strengths of *Innovators and Preachers*. Bagehot remarked that it was Francis Jeffrey, the first Editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, who originally defined and dignified the office of editorship, transforming the editor from a "bookseller's drudge" into a "distinguished functionary", and nobody has ever found reason to doubt Bagehot's verdict. Yet except in a paper by Joanne Shattock – the present book makes no attempt to assess its significance. The point is that in Jeffrey's editorship all the characteristics of later Victorian editors of stature were amply foreshadowed.

Jeffrey, who edited the *Edinburgh Review* from 1802 until 1829, established the principles of editorial independence and of editorial intervention. Shattock argues that Jeffrey, a lawyer editing an intellectual review in his spare time, epitomized the concept of "gentlemanly amateurism". But he was also, both as a lawyer and a journalist, immersed in public affairs, and this had larger implications than she grants. Editing an influential Whig journal brought Jeffrey into contact with politicians and guaranteed him their respect, and he not only wrote about politics in the *Edinburgh Review* but eventually, albeit briefly, became a politician himself. Here was a career – a model of the editor as lionized man of letters and affairs – which would be matched by later editors of periodicals and of newspapers: John Marley, most notably, a towering figure among later Victorian editors, followed the Jeffreyan pattern, though Marley, in spite of his high consequence as Editor of the *Fortnightly Review* and as a statesman, is scarcely mentioned in this book. Bizarrely, indeed, *Innovators and Preachers* is mostly indifferent to the political aspect of so much of Victorian editing.

Joanne Shattock writes interestingly about Jeffrey's successors George Cornewall Lewis and Henry Reeve, but her notion that the *Edinburgh Review* only became a great political organ after Jeffrey's retirement from editing won't do. As it happens, the extent to which Jeffrey's journal was perceived as a political review during its early years can be judged from a paper in this book on Cobbett and the *Edinburgh Review*, by the late George Spater. Cobbett, who was attacked by Jeffrey in the *Edinburgh Review*, was angrily conscious of Jeffrey and his colleagues as rival political writers. Spater's paper is wrong, however, to say that Cobbett was assailed at the instigation of Henry Brougham. For in fact, as Robert Stewart's recent biography of him shows, Brougham feared that by deigning to notice a Jacobinical hack like Cobbett, Jeffrey ran the risk of degrading a superior journal.

The *Edinburgh Review* reviewers were anxious to distinguish themselves from the journalistic ruck. Jeffrey prided himself as an editor on

dealing with contributors who were gentlemen, and he was no less concerned that they should write like gentlemen. In this, too, he anticipated later editors in the field of what became known as the "higher journalism". So much is evident here from Barbara Quinn Schmidt's paper on the *Cornhill Magazine* as edited, successively, by Thackeray and by Leslie Stephen. Just as Jeffrey respected the rules of the drawing-room and purged his *Review* of intemperate language, so Stephen, it appears, adhered to the principle of never shocking a young lady or challenging accepted creeds. Such scruples dictated the *Cornhill*'s discontinuation of Ruskin's *Unto this Last and*, later, Stephen's bowdlerizing of *Far from the Madding Crowd*. None the less some controversial material was deemed necessary for circulation, and both Thackeray and Stephen sought a balance between the "sophisticated debunking of commonplaces and an attacking of cherished social beliefs". It is a pity that Schmidt's excellent profile of Stephen's editorship does not say more about his commitment to anonymity. Anonymity is one of the major issues of Victorian journalism and it was, as Christopher Kent acknowledges in his paper on the editor and the law, in some measure bound up with questions of propriety and respectability.

But the "higher journalism" was only one aspect, if an imposing one, of the Victorian press. The reading public – the story is a familiar one – was growing apace and the market became ever more diversified. There was no lack of opportunity for editors who wished to cater to less elevated tastes than the *Cornhill* had served. (It is interesting to note that by the 1880s the *Cornhill* was no longer sure whether it was in the business of enlightenment or of entertainment.) Consider the case of Edmund Yates, who is the subject of an enjoyable paper by Joel Wiener. Yates edited a publication called *The World: A Journal for men and women* from 1874 until 1894, and Wiener portrays him as one of the founders of the modern gossip column. The Nigel Dempster of his day, Yates was a professional flâneur, ubiquitously dining and dining and combining the public prints in pursuit of gossip about celebrities. Indeed, he was the kind of journalist whom the

late Q. D. Leavis might have taken as an example of the progressive degeneracy of Victorian popular culture – though it is a measure of the unfashionability of the Leavises that, despite their pioneering interest in the history of journalism, neither is invoked in this book.

Except that he was roughly his contemporary, Edmund Yates would seem to have little in common with a "distinguished functionary" such as Leslie Stephen. Yet Wiener discerns both of them the emergence of the "classic" Victorian editor, that is, one who by virtue of his powerful personality, tough-minded cutting and an intuitive grasp of the market became a dominant figure in the world of print. But in view of Jeffrey's early exemplification of most, if not all, of these qualities, this seems an arbitrary and misleading scheme of development. Nor is Wiener's claim plausible that the "classic" editor, with his "identifying readership", had virtually disappeared by 1914. C. P. Scott on the *Guardian*, for example, Kingsley Martin on the *New Statesman* and, more recently, Harold Evans on *The Sunday Times* could all be regarded as epigones of the great tradition of editing that Jeffrey inaugurated.

Innovators and Preachers also deals with early feminist editing, the editing of art journals, of society journals and of the provincial press – and even then the list is incomplete. The book has caught too many fish, and as they wriggle around, some big and some small, it is not always easy to distinguish them from each other. Overall, the papers lack the coherence of those in the current issue of the *Yearbook of English Studies* devoted to literary periodicals (TLS, February 21). By concentrating on a single type of publication and by looking chronologically at some of its notable exemplars in the past 200 years, the *Yearbook* throws light on a tradition. The continuity between the *Edinburgh Review* and the *New York Review of Books*, for instance, is laid bare. Still, if no such service is rendered by *Innovators and Preachers*, it at least points up the heterogeneity of Victorian journalism; moreover, it ought to discourage anybody from taking too seriously Joel Wiener's invitation to treat the papers which he has gathered as the starting-point for a major history of Victorian editing. That, of course, is only sales talk.

medically dangerous".

Times change and now masturbation is considered almost obligatory, although the tolerant Miss Jane Cousins, in her *Mok It Happy: What sex is all about*, says, "You don't have to masturbate." *The Sensuous Woman: The first "how to" book for the female who yearns to be off woman*, however, advises that "several hours a week should be set aside for masturbation so your new response pattern will become a stable one". There is little sexual activity which carries a health risk for comfort, even "ropemarks usually go in a few hours if you have been gentle". For the good Doctor there is also nothing healthier than a full rich fantasy life to go with a course of physical co-terprise. "Be the Sultan and his concubine," he advises, "the burglar and the maiden"; and, in a surprising and highly resistible image, "even the dog and his current bun".

No particular limit is set, in the most recent manuals, on the number of buns the dog may enjoy, or indeed on the number of dogs that may be made available to the bun. "You can be multi-friended", says Helen Gurley Brown in *Having It All*. Comfort thinks it safe to say that anyone who suggests that "something two people enjoy doing together might be immature or unhealthy is probably talking tosh". You have to go back to the dark days of Lord Baden-Powell's advice to his Rover Scouts to discover the efficacy of cold baths and a brisk run around the playing-field. "Put a woman on a pedestal," he writes, "for a man who has his chivalry and respect for women could never lower himself to behave like a beast." It is a chilling thought that the infliction of AIDS on the world may bring chastity back into style, and *More Joy of Sex* will have to be rewritten along the lines of *Rovering To Success*. Meanwhile Alan Rusbridger's compilation is good for a laugh and Poy Simmonds's illustrations exactly catch the anxious earnestness of those who make love according to the book

The burning of the Globe

Peter Beal

On June 29, 1613, the Globe Theatre on the Bankside in Southwark was totally destroyed by fire. This was the original Globe playhouse, built early in 1599 in Maiden Lane (the present Park Street) by Richard Burbage and his partners: the theatre partly owned by Shakespeare in which were first produced many of his greatest plays. The accident which caused the disaster occurred in the middle of a performance of *Henry VIII*, Shakespeare's last known play, and the event marks, in effect, the end of his career.

Contemporary accounts of the event are given in letters by Thomas Lorkin to Sir Thomas Puckering (June 30), by Sir Henry Wotton to Sir Edmund Bacon (July 2), by Henry Blunt to his uncle Richard Weekes (July 4) and by John Chamberlain to Sir Ralph Winwood (July 8). Other references and accounts appear in an almanack-journal compiled in 1613 by Matthew Page; in Edmund Hawes's continuation of John Stow's *Annals* (1618); and in Ben Jonson's "Exercitation upon Vulcan", written in 1623. It is now possible, moreover, to announce the rediscovery of a contemporary ballad on the event, printed early in the nineteenth century, the dating and authenticity of which have occasionally been questioned.

On St Peter's Day, Tuesday, June 29, 1613, the King's Players, says Wotton, "had a new play called *All is True*, representing some principal pieces of the Reign of Henry 8". The name of the play is confirmed in the accounts by Blunt and by Page and also, indirectly, in the ballad, which has the refrain "yet all this is true" and refers, besides, to "Henry the eight". Lorkin and Hawes refer to the play, respectively, as "the play of Hen: 8" and "the play, viz. of Henry the eight". If any confirmation is required that this play, *All is True*, and the work printed in the Shakespeare First Folio (1623) as *The Famous History of the Life of King Henry the Eighth* are one and the same play it appears in the Prologue to the latter, where the actors refer to the "chosen truth" of their show and to their declared intention "To make that only true" – a comment probably intended as a reflection on Samuel Rowley's earlier, frivolous play on the same subject, *When You See Me, You Know Me*. On stylistic grounds scholars have generally agreed that *Henry VIII* was belatedly written by Shakespeare as a collaborative effort, probably with John Fletcher, although whether *All is True* was the original title or only a subtitle remain a matter of speculation.

Both Wotton and Blunt refer to the piece as "a new play" and Blunt adds that it "had been acted not passing 2 or 3 times before". Thus, he continues, "There came many people to see

it in so much that ye howse was very full" (it was "filled with people", Hawes confirms). Wotton suggests a further reason for the play's popularity in that it "was set forth with many extraordinary circumstances of Pomp and Majesty, even to the matting of the stage; the Knights of the Order, with their George and Garter, the Guards with their embroidered Coats, and the like: sufficient in truth within a while to make greatness very familiar, if not ridiculous". Wotton was perhaps referring here particularly to the elaborate Coronation procession in Act Four, Scene One (which, according to the printed text, included among other richly arrayed dignitaries, the "Garter [King-of-Arms], in his coat of arms and . . . gilt copper crown"), although this most pageant-like of plays presents other opportunities besides for elaborate and stately entries. It was a piece of off-stage business resulting from this "Pomp" which caused the disaster.

"Now King Henry making a Masque at Cardinal Wolsey's House", Wotton records, "certtain Canons were 'shot off at his entry'. This refers to Act One, Scene Four, where directions in the printed text call for "Drum and trumpet; chambers [viz. canons] discharging" to herald the arrival of the King and his courtiers, "as masquers, habited like shepherds", at Wolsey's banquet. Wolsey actually comments on the firing: "What warlike voice, / And to what end is this?" In their accounts Lorkin and

Chamberlain refer, respectively, to the "shooting of certayne chambers in way of triumph" and to "a peale of chambers (that I know not upon what occasion were to be used in the play)". Howes adds that this "negligent discharging of a peale of Ordnance" took place "close to the South side" of the theatre. Blunt remarks, somewhat more ambiguously, that it was "as the play was almost ended" that "the house was fired with shooting off a Chamber"; however, it seems clear from Wotton's account that it took some time for the fire actually to take hold after the firing of the cannon, so there is no real inconsistency here in point of time. "Some of the Paper, or other stuff where-with one of them [the cannon] was stapped", says Wotton, "did light on the Thatch, where", he continues, "being thought at first but an idle smock, and their [the audience's] eyes more attentive to the show, it [the fire] kindled inwardly, and ran round like a train". Blunt reports that the offending cannon was "stopt with towie [viz. straw] which was blown up into the thicket of the house"; Chamberlain refers to "the tampion or stoppell" (the tampion or wooden stopper for the muzzle) of one of the cannon "lighting in the thatch that covered the house"; while Howes records that "the Thatch took fire, and the wind sodainly disperst the flame round about". These comments are a reminder that the Globe was indeed circular in shape ("As round as taylor's clewe [tailor's ball

A book at bedtime

John Mortimer

ALAN RUSBRIDGER
A Concise History of the Sex Manual 1886-1986
204pp. Paper. £10.95 (paperback, £4.95).
0371 454777

The most important thing to remember about sex is that it is a subject for comedy. This is a fact that the best writers on the subject, Shakespeare, Chaucer, Feydeau and Kingsley Amls have always clearly understood. The comic nature of sex derives from the fact that it causes those motivated by it to attempt ridiculous positions, attach themselves to inappropriate companions and generally invite disaster. For this reason the so-called "dirty joke" often comes nearer to the truth of the human condition than pornography, which is always portentously solemn, the novels of D. H. Lawrence (not many laughs between Mellors and Lady C.) and, to judge from the quotations in this entertaining survey, all sex manuals from Marie Stopes to Dr Alex Comfort.

A Concise History of the Sex Manual 1886-1986 by Alan Rusbridger is entertaining because sex manuals are funny, but not consciously so, and, I suppose, must be taken seriously by the millions (fifty to sixty thousand copies of Dr Comfort's *The Joy of Sex* are sold annually) who presumably use them as serious works of instruction in the same way as they might cook with Delia Smith open on the marble work-surface, or stretch out on the floor



"The Embrace" (1911) by Miklós von Zichy: one of the exhibits in The Forbidden Library: An exhibition of erotic illustration from the 18th century to the present day, presented by Robert and Maclean at Peter Biddulph's Gallery, 35 St George Street, Hanover Square, London W1 until July 18.

with *A Hundred Things You Need To Know About Your Ford Cortina*. There must, I suppose, be bedrooms from Islington to St Ives where Comfort, or Van der Velde, is open on the pillow for advice on positions (Anterior-Lateral attitude, good during convalescence. Man partially immobilized. Apt or eccentricities (Chains – for the tied up, tinkling look. Unusually). It seems to me that such works are better understood by children who, probably knowing more about the subject than their parents, find them in the bedside cupboard and giggle.

But do couples, overcome with passion, really go to sex manuals for advice; or are the millions of copies a year simply bought for laughs? If they are taken seriously they must have led to some weird bedroom behaviour. Perhaps the most fascinating aspect of Rus-

bridger's compilation is the light it throws on the doctors and sexologists who have given, over the years, as wildly differing and dotty advice as that on sale from the diet-book industry. Just as almost anything you choose to eat can, according to medical opinion from time to time, lead to heart failure, hair loss and cancer, so most varieties of sex were, until recently, thought to have dire and fatal consequences. It wasn't only masturbation that led to blindness, curvature of the spine and an early grave. Premarital sex, Dr Elizabeth Blackwell wrote in 1884, leads to "moral degradation and physical disease". In 1900 Dr Sperry warned that "intimacy during engagement" endangered both physical and moral development. As late as 1963 a certain Dr Ernest Claxon, who managed to become Assistant Secretary to the BMA, had no doubt that sex outside marriage "is

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of thread"] as the ballad writer called it); that the roofed section of the theatre was thatched (it had not the benefit of expensive "tiles", stressed the ballad writer); and that a major portion of the theatre was unsheltered and open to the elements, which in that day included wind.

When the flames finally took hold – perhaps near the end of the play, as Bluet claims – then the "whole House" was soon consumed, says Wotton, "to the very grounds". This took, he says, "less than an hour". Howes reports that "the whole building" was consumed "in a very short space"; the fire in the thatch "burned so furiously", says Lorkin, "as it consumed all in less than two hours"; and Chamberlain too records that it burned "down to the ground in less than two hours", together with "a dwelling house adjoining" (this was an "inlet house", according to the ballad).

It was "a great marvayle and fayre grace of God", Chamberlain declares, "that the people had so little harme, having but two narrow doores to get out". While, according to Lorkin, the people had "enough to doe to save themselves" and, if the ballad is to be believed, there was general consternation, if not panic, the reports are consistent in declaring that no one in the crowded audience was seriously hurt. "Nothing did perish", Wotton reports, "but a few forsaken Clnaks; only one man had his Breaches set on fire, that would perhaps have hroyled him, if he had not by the benefit of a provident wit put it out with bottle ale". The subject of Wotton's anecdote here (which is surely too good to be an invention) might, perhaps, be the same casually mentioned by Bluet, who reports, dramatically, that "the people escaped all without hurte except one man who was scalded with the fier by aduentering in to saua a Child which otherwise had bene burnt". Besides all else, and unless the child mentioned was rather a boy actor in the company, Bluet's anecdote is an indication that the Globe's audience did not consist solely of adults.

This, writes Wotton, was "the fatal period of that vertuous Fabrique". Ben Jonson too recalled in sorrow, ten years later, how he saw "the Globe, the Glory of the Banke" razed "with two poore Chambers", even though "it were the Fort of the whole Parish, / Flanked with a Ditch [sewer], and forc'd out of a Marsh". The very next day two ballads on the subject were entered in the Stationers' Register: one for Simon Stafford, "a ballad called the sodayne Burninge of the Globe on the Bankside in the Pny tyme on Saint Peters day last 1613"; the other for Edward White, "a dolefull ballad of the general ouerthrowe of the famous theater on the Banksyde called the Globe &c by William Parrot". If either of these ballads was indeed published, no copy is known today, which can hardly be cause for surprise in view of the ephemeral nature of such material. One similar ballad, however – which might just possibly be the same as that by William Parrot, in view of the reference to a "dolefull tragedie" in its third line – is preserved in a later transcript made by the Yorkshire antiquary John Hopkinson (1610-80), now among the county archives in Bradford. This text was discovered and first printed, in a slightly edited version, by "Eu. Hood" (viz the antiquary Joseph Haskewood) in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 86.1 (1816), p. 114. Since the manuscript used by Haskewood was long lost to sight, it has been possible for a scholar as recently as 1957 to state that the authenticity of this ballad "has not been proved or disproved", while R. A. Foakes also went on to question its date, since the use of the word "abhor" in connection with petitions (found in the last stanza of the ballad) is not otherwise recorded before 1679-80. In fact, the authenticity of the manuscript – one of Hopkinson's collections of poems dating no later than 1641 – is unquestionable. Moreover, the amount of local detail it contains leaves no doubt that the ballad must have been composed very shortly after the event it recounts.

It is a jocular depiction of the Globe audience's undignified consternation after the

alarm was raised, with humorous references to some of the main actors of the company (Richard Burbage, Henry Condell and John Hemming) and to the play of *Henry VIII* (*All is True*) itself. Except for expanding abbreviations, I reproduce here the complete text exactly as it appears in Hopkinson's manuscript.

A Sonnet vpon the pittifull burneing of the Olobe-playhowse in London

Now sit the downe Melpamene
wrap in a sea robe cole
And tell the dolefull tragedie
that late was playd on globe
for nae man that can sloge & saye
was seard on St Peters daye
Oh sarrow pittifull sarrow and yett all this is true.

All you that please to vnderstand
come listen to my storye
To see deah with his raking brand
mangst such an auditory
regarding neither Cardinals might
nor yett the rugged face of Henry the eight
Oh sarrow &c

This fearful fire beganne about
a wonder strange & true
and to the stage-howse did remoue
as round as taylors clewe
and burnt downe both beame & snags
and did not spare the silken flags.
Oh sarrow &c

Out runne the Knights: out runne the Lordes
and there was great adoe
some lost their hatts & some their swordes
then out runne Burbidge too
the reprobates thoughte druncke on munday
pray'd for the foole & Henry Condyne
Oh sarrow &c

The perrywigs & drumme-heads frye
like a butter flirkin
a wofull burneing did betide
to maye a good buffe larkin;
then with swote eyes like drunckes flammings
discredded stood old stuttring Hemmings.
Oh sarrow &c

Noe shouer his raine did there downe force
in all that sunn-shine weather
to saue that great renowned howse
nor thou O sallowe neither
had it begune belowe sans doubt
their whies for feare had pissett it out
Oh sarrow &c

Bee warned yow stage strutters all
Least yow againe be catched,
and such a burneing doe befall
as to them whose howse was thatched
for beare your whoring breeding blies
and laye up that expence for illes
Oh sarrow &c

Goe drawe yow a petition
and doe yow not abhorre it
and gett with low submission
a licence to begg for lit
In Churches saue Churchwardens checks
in Surrey & in Middlesex.
Oh sarrow pittifull sarrow, and yett all this is true.

The mockery of the ballad-writer was evidently echoed in their own way by Puritans – "The Brethren", as Jonson called them, who viewed the theatre as but a "Relique of the Stewes" and who saw the hand of God in its destruction. Nevertheless, Burbage's company survived, if yet without Shakespeare, and the theatre was quickly rebuilt – "in farre fairer manner", says Howes, and this time with tiles instead of thatch. The second Globe stood for thirty years until, according to contemporary legal records, it was "pulled downe to the ground, by Sir Matthew Brand, on Munday the 15 of April 1644". The theatre, which had been closed down by the Puritans two years earlier, was deliberately demolished "to make tenements in the room of it".

The sources for the accounts of and references to the destruction of the Globe cited in the second paragraph are, respectively, *British Library: Harley MS 7002, fo 268*; *Reliquiae Wottonianae* (3rd edition, 1872), pp. 425-6; *o MS in private ownership* (soon to be sold); *Winwood Papers*, vol. ix, owned by the Duke of Buccleugh and Queensberry, at Boughton House, Northamptonshire; *Bodleian Library: MS Ashmole 65, sig B2*; *Stow's Annals* (1618); Ben Jonson, edited by C. H. Herford and P. and E. Simpson, vol. viii (1947), pp. 208-9; and *West Yorkshire Archive Service, Bradford, Hopkinson MSS*, vol. 34, pp. 14-15. Printed texts and discussions are to be found in E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage* (1923), II, 419-23; the Arden edition of *King Henry VIII*, edited by R. A. Foakes (1957), pp. 175-83; Shakespeare Quarterly, 32 (1981), p. 352; and *Notes and Queries*, 220 (June 1986), pp. 217-18. The ballad is printed by permission of the West Yorkshire Archive Service.

Devouring interest

Eric Korn

NORMAN HICKIN
Bookworms: The insect pests of books
176pp. Sheppard Press. £15.
0900661 380

The dollar-rich foreign buyer may be as rare as the quagga and as eagerly sought, but for all the trade a quiet desperation there is still one class of book-lovers who are unwelcome. You won't find in Park Lane or Russell Square (I can't vouch for the other venues) any of Norman Hickin's subjects, small furry white-kerry parasites who make a living from books in the most direct (some would say the most straightforward) way, by eating them.

Most people, even in the trade, have never seen a live bookworm at its fell work, and except to those professionally involved with conservation they remain creatures of terror, shame and ignorance, the subjects of rumour and old wives' remedies and sheepish jokes (any number of dealers use "bookworm" in their company name: one trades from Asbium House).

Dr Hickin, for many years Scientific Director of Rentokil, remains philosophical: the destruction of books is a natural process, he opines. *Bookworms: The insect pests of books* gives an account of the anatomy and taxonomy of insects in general, before a roll-call of the frighteningly extensive rogues' gallery of injurious species, with a fairly detailed description of each. (I say "fairly detailed", for without exploring the incomprehensible minutiae of mouth-parts and genitalia one cannot make sure identifications; but most booksellers will be able to get a shrewd idea of who has been eating off their plates.)

What a bizarre gang they are: the primitive silverfish with its sophisticated preference for chemically pulped paper; the firebrat that survives on left-over sandwiches; termites (distinguished as one of the few creatures that can pass from mere intolerable damage to "utter destruction"); the psocoptera or booklice, which have been around since the Upper Carboniferous, 300 million years before Gutenberg, biding their time with ghastly patience; clothes moths (including a variety that prefers piano felts); the bacon beetle (after Francis Bacon, I presume: reading makes it full beetle); the brown house-moth of the Lenin Library, lecherous and sly, which, not content with making nasty holes on its larval way in and nastier ones on its way out, returns as an adult and digs monstrous brood chambers for the next generation; the Tweedledee and Tweedledee of bibliography, *Stegobium* and *Xestobium* – the first tunnels parallel to the plane of the book-cover and the second at right angles to it – the Mr and Mrs Sprat of bibliography rather; the two weevils *Pentarthrum huttoni* and *Euophrys confinis*, which attack in damp conditions (*Euophrys*, though a recent immigrant from New Zealand, is now more abundant, so *Pentarthrum* counts as the lesser of two evils); and *Trogium pulchellum*, which adds insult by singing as it goes about its deadly work.

There are some striking photographs, which book-lovers of a nervous disposition should avoid, a dispiriting chapter on optimum conditions for storage (my premises are optimum for the growth of spider beetles) and a curiously brief chapter on what to do about it all. There is also a chapter on book-loving insects and arachnids which do not directly damage the books, though few are as benign as the grain itch mite, *Ptyonotus ventricosus*, which consumes the larva of *Anobium punctatum*, the woodworm. She buries her head in the prey and remains there browsing; inside her swollen abdomen develop innumerable offspring, which go about their business on her broad bulging surface. The sons never leave: the daughters depart when fertilized and look for new book-pasts to eat. This promiscuous benefice has limits: when they run out of *Anobium* they attack librarians. Then there are the crickets, "browsers and spoilers" Norman Hickin calls them; a familiar category; and thrips: "other than the presence of their dead bodies they cause no further injury". I wish I could say as much of all the other insects.

Okey Farley's girls

Joanna Motion

CYNTHIA RYLAND
Some Year far Ellie
80pp. Viking Kestrel. £5.95.
0670 809225

Ellie is a coalminer's daughter. Or, rather, one of five daughters of a miner turned by an accident at work into a committed drinker. Ellie and her sisters live in mountainous country in the United States, sharing a family life which becomes strained, too huggy-muggy and too poor for comfort after their father stops work. "Nobody knew the names of Okey Farley's girls. Just knew them by labels like The Oldest, The Tall One, The Brown-Headed One, The Skinny One, and, in Ellie's case, The One With the Brace on her Teeth." The brace is a badge of immaturity. Ellie's sisters are all teenagers smitten with secret silences while Ellie, at the opening of the book, is more interested in chatting to her dog, Bullet. The year of the novel's

title takes Ellie from her eleventh to her twelfth birthday, from childhood to the edge of adolescence.

The narrative is divided into four seasons, each marked by incidents which introduce Ellie to a sense of the greater complications and consequence of the life she is entering. Out hunting for squirrels with her father and Bullet, she gets the chance to shoot a deer but holds back, learning the satisfaction of not automatically choosing the easiest action. Boy-friendless Ellie dreads Valentine's Day, but she discovers that there are worse fates than loss of face in the classroom when the school bus that day is halted in snow and the children trek to safety through the drifts. There are unexpected comforts at journey's end, too.

The elation of friendship; the recognition of adult unhappiness; television pictures of the war made real when her soldier uncle returns home; getting kissed; ageing, fear and loss, all come Ellie's way in the course of her year of growing up. There are times when the incidents seem to belong too transparently to a primer for the getting of wisdom – a tendency

underlined by the otherwise admirable simplicity of Cynthia Rylant's writing. "Ellie Sees a Fit" as a chapter heading strays perilously close to parodied Janet and John or Dick and Jane. For non-American readers, the setting adds a welcome touch of the exotic to the familiar working of family life. It makes its presence felt in elements ranging from the names of Ellie's sisters (there are not too many Wandas and Eunices in the coal-fields of Derbyshire) to her father's Chevy truck and the family attendance at the Church of God. There is, too, a controversial directness in the book's style. Rylant tackles demanding topics – a classmate of Ellie's is shot dead during target practice, her father goes into hospital after driving his truck off the edge of a mountain – in straightforward terms: "Ellie went to the funeral. First one she'd ever gone to. Lester looked just about the same to her dead as he had looked alive. She was ashamed she had found him boring then and still did." The result is a compassionate and reassuring book most likely to appeal to a group a little younger than that of Ellie herself.

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Peter Owen point out that their recent edition, In Louise Varese's translation, of Marcel Proust's *Pleasures and Regrets*, reviewed by Francis Steegmuller in the TLS, May 30 (and inadvertently omitted by us from the contents list and Index of that issue), is a reprint of the original translation published by Lear including, in addition to D. J. Enright's new preface, corrections of typographical errors and of certain mistranslations. It is not a reprinting of the Ecco Press reprint of last year.

The name of the author of *England, First and Last*, reviewed by Janet Morgan in the TLS, April 25, should have been given as Anthony Bailey rather than as A. C. Bailey.

The first volume of the new Contemporary Authors: Bibliographical Series, *American Novelists*, is edited by James J. Martina (431pp. Detroit, MI: Gale. \$48. 0 8103 2250 0) is devoted to the work of James Baldwin, John Barth, Saul Bellow, John Cheever, Joseph Heller, Norman Mailer, Bernard Malamud, Carson McCullers, John Updike and Eudora Welty. Each section contains a long introduction, a primary bibliography of American and English first and other significant editions, and a list of secondary work on each author.

Down at ditch level

Katherine Duncan-Jones

BETSY BYARS
The Not-Just-Anybody Family
148pp. Bodley Head. £4.95.
0370 307240

A fluent tongue is needed to pronounce the title of this book, and a strong stomach for reading it; though no doubt Betsy Byars, whose sixteenth story this is, was wise not to call it *The Blossoms*. *The Not-Just-Anybody Family* is a tough, entertaining American urban romance, in the best tradition of stories about children carrying more than adult responsibilities and almost magically winning the day. But the overpoweringly demotic language, full of trade names and abbreviations, can be puzzling, and I felt at times that a glossary or subtitles should have been added for United Kingdom readers.

The adventures of the Blossom family are a far cry from the Famous Five. Layers of American life are evoked of which English children can have little conception. Pap Blossom supports his three grandchildren by gathering up "beer ad pop cans" from "gas station trash cans" and getting five cents back on the empties. He has an accident with his truck, impetuously pulls out a shot-gun, and finds

himself in the city gaol – "The good thing about this gaol is the AC", says a fellow prisoner. Meanwhile, the youngest child, Junior, has broken both legs falling off a barn with wire wings tied to his arms. Next to him in the hospital is an alarming boy called Ralphie, who



One of Marilyn Hafner's illustrations to Mrs Gaddy and the Fast-Growing Vine by Wilson Gage, their third book about the redoubtable American farmer (4pp. Bodley Head. £4.95. 0 370 30745 3).

terrifies Junior with accounts of the treatment he can expect – hammers used for anaesthesia – and of his own malady: "When I bust open, you better get out of the way or you'll get water-melon and guts all over you." The older children, Maggie and Vern, have a more conventionally exciting time trying to rescue the

others, while Pap's dog Mud has the most hair-raising adventures of all, culminating in a near-blinding encounter with a skunk.

Through Mud, we get a brilliantly vivid ditch-level view of American urban life, as he lies "under the carryout window of a Dairy Queen", and is fed substantial morsels of hamburger and bacon cheeseburger, ending his meal with chocolate milk-shake. Other people's waste is meat and drink to the Blossoms. Mud doesn't like the rich end of town, finding chlorinated swimming-pool water less to his taste than water from the family lavatory. His agonized negotiation of the congested and polluted Interstate is thrillingly told, and the dog's heroic odyssey rounds off a comforting happy ending. But this is not a story for the squeamish. Having endured Ralphie's anatomical fantasies and Mud's meals of leftovers, serious queasiness may set in when reading of the food actually chosen by members of the Blossom family. Like Dickens's Maggie in *Little Dorrit*, who had "Chickling", Mrs Byars's Maggie enjoys hospital food – "She had bought a pimento cheese sandwich from a vending machine, heated it miraculously in a small oven, and washed it down with an ice-cold Mello-Yello." The Blossom family's favourite breakfast is squashed, fried shredded wheat with lots of syrup. But for the stout-hearted, this is an excellent read.

A community of feeling

Tony Bradman

BERNARD ASHLEY
Running Scared
187pp. Julia MacRae. £7.50 (paperback, £1.95).
086203 238 5

In recent years there has been an increasingly insistent demand for books which, in the usual phrase, "reflect our multi-cultural society". This is a very worthwhile aim, but a writer who sets out self-consciously to tackle an issue, for example by building a novel around the subject of racism, risks undermining his story before he starts. Children in particular need a strong story and good characters in their fiction. What they don't need is to be preached at, however worthy the cause.

Such problems are, in the main, avoided in Bernard Ashley's most recent book, a "novelization" of the television series he wrote for the BBC. *Running Scared* represents a high order of achievement. It has strong characters, a thrilling plot and a satisfying, but realistic climax which comes on the very last page. Moreover, by making sure that the novel works well as a novel, Ashley manages to convey some understanding of what it is like to be Asian in parts of Britain today.

The plot centres on Paula Prescott, an East London schoolgirl, and her best friend Narinder, daughter of a Sikh family who have been settled in England for many years. Paula's cab-

driver grandfather finds himself an innocent witness to a bungled robbery, and is left with a vital piece of evidence that could put Charlie Elkin, the local Mr Big, away for a long time. Life is made more complicated by the fact that Paula's cousin Brian is a minor acolyte of Elkin's and performs his apprentice work in villainy by extorting protection money from local Asians – like Narinder's father. Such is the pressure brought to bear on Narinder's family that her father decides to return to India, a devastating blow for his daughter, who feels herself to be as much of a Londoner as her white friend, Paula.

A further complication comes when Paula's grandfather dies, having concealed the evidence and, in the best traditions of the thriller, having also left a cryptic clue as to its whereabouts. From that point the chase is on, a chase which involves Paula and Narinder. The two friends argue, but renew their friendship and work together to find the evidence, which turns up in the local Gurdwara, or Sikh temple.

Paula, however, is left with the sort of moral dilemma with which many of Bernard Ashley's characters have to deal. Should she hand the evidence to the police and be instrumental in sending one of her own family to prison? Or should she destroy the evidence, and therefore give to Elkin and the forces of evil, a decision which will confirm Narinder's father in his belief that only white English people will help him or his family, and virtually ensure Narinder's return to a country she does not consider her own?

Paula's decision is both credible and creditable, as always with Bernard Ashley's work, the apparently rounded ending leaves much which is worth pondering. I have no doubt that many children who followed and enjoyed the well-made television series will also enjoy the book. Inevitably, some of the joins between the scripts show here and there, and occasionally exposition seems long-winded in comparison to the visual speed of television, but in general Ashley has made a very good job of translating from one medium into another, and maintained the feeling of menace that television does so well.

Running Scared avoids preaching, and concentrates on exploring character, motive, emotion, action, all in the context of a story. In doing this Ashley also manages to make the reader feel what it must be like to be hounded and threatened, as are both Paula and Narinder. In the similarities in the way that two girls feel about the pressures on their respective families, the novel reveals the common humanity of two communities who live uneasily together.

Five Tides (64pp. £3.95. 0 94884 500 7) by Jill Paton Walsh is the first title from a new imprint, Green Bay Publications, 72 Water Lane, Histon, Cambs CB4 4LR. Four of the stories about the Cornish seacoast and the people who make their living from the sea originally appeared in 1976 in a Macmillan anthology and the author has added a fifth longer one for this edition.

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Eye'. The painting is the catalogue of the recent retrospective exhibition (120pp, with
seventeen plates in colour and seventy to black-and-white. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press
for the Santa Barbara Museum of Art. Paperback, \$20.00, ISBN 0-295-96351-4).

695 TLS June 27 1986 LITERATURE

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The novel, friends, is boring - to paraphrase John Berryman - though we must not say so. And the most boring novels may well be those which once most enthralled their readers. According to Tolstoy, and he was following a well-attested story, General Kutuzov behind the lines at Borodino was so gripped by Madame de Staël's *Delphine* that he had no leisure to direct the battle. But the people least bored by novels were the ones who most read them, and by whom they were mostly written - women. As Dale Spender points out in *Mothers of the Novel*, women wanted to know what other women were feeling and doing, whether the female predicament was everywhere as bad and as boring as it was for them. There was a kind of weightlessness in their mental experience, a lightness of conscious being which could be given substance by a stylization of the patterns and preoccupations of other lives, similar lives.

These were not Auden's "solitary women in country parishes", a class which in the nature of things only began to have an existence in our own century, nor were they the "excellent women" of Barbara Pym. They were usually immersed in family life, either as wives and

mothers, or as aunts and dependants, or as young aspirants of the marriage market living at home. They suffered all the domestic ills which lay behind the graceful fanlights of eighteenth-century streets or the placid exteriors of country houses. Novels in some sense must have been like catalogues and trade journals, or like comfortably interminable telephone conversations. The high schemes of moral fictions and the dream adventures and landscapes of Ann Radcliffe must alike have been matter to fill up and to fill out life, providing an auxiliary existence which could dignify the starkness of everyday fact. The memorial tablet in Bath of Sarah Fielding, sister of Henry, who died in 1768, may have recorded that "her writings will be known as incentives to virtue and honour to her sex", but such honours and incentives were less important than the fact that she actually wrote about women, and helped to invent for them a consciousness parallel to that which men had evolved over so much longer a period.

As so constructed, that consciousness is arguably more stylized than any that men have cooked up for themselves. Indeed it seems likely that the novel has tended over the years to separate the images of the sexes, as much as anything for the sake of variety and to ring the changes on "human interest". In Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* there is no suggestion that women are more this or more that than men, or have a special area of sensibility. But by mid-eighteenth century the separate image is well established where the novel is concerned, and is regarded by men with approval and complacency. This can be heard in Samuel Richardson's words of commendation to Sarah Fielding (whose *The Governess*, or *The Little Female Academy* will be republished in the Pandora series next year):

What a knowledge of the human heart! Well might a critical judge of writing say, as he did to me, that your late brother's knowledge of it was not (fine writer as he was) comparable to yours. His was but a knowledge of the outside of a clockwork machine, while yours was that of the finer springs and movements of the inside.

Richardson knew how to flatter, of course. But there is a note of easy patronage in this too. Knowledge of the heart and of the finer feelings was becoming, in the context of the novel, the equivalent of "women's work" in the home. Dr Johnson, who preferred Richardson to Fielding for his superiority in feeling, and who is the "critical judge" here referred to, was characteristically consistent in his preference

for Sarah Fielding's novels before those of her more famous brother. Like many men - Jane Austen's father was another - he liked his novels to be written by women. Already the net is closing in. Women's fatal adaptation to what men like had already begun to produce the feminine sensibility in the novel, the sensibility that men would praise so highly in George Eliot. The hint of patronage in Richardson's commendation has become almost stereotyped in Desmond MacCarthy's affection for the average female novel of his time, which, he said, always began with some such sentence as "Robina was glad she had lighted a fire." Isn't the little woman delicious?

In fact of course the very best women novelists in any age do not show or cultivate a female sensibility: the question simply does not arise. Jane Austen makes no parade of her special forms of tenderness or insight. But Charlotte Brontë does and - despite her pseudonym - George Eliot does, and so do whole tribes of women novelists in our own time. Feminism, even in its most understanding and rational forms, produces in novels a separate tone, which is also, inevitably, a superior tone. Virginia Woolf's potent influence, and her superiorities, and her brilliant helplessness, can often also come very close to being glad they have lighted a fire. Men, alas, can patronize superiority too, just as easily as they can patronize anything else in women. As Dale Spender justly observes, when Walter Allen contrasts *Toni Jones* and *Evelina* it is a classic example of the double standard and the backhanded compliment, "for he reveals more explicitly than most the way a woman writer can be damned with praise for her 'feminine' achievement". But here we almost instantly reach an impasse where men can do nothing right, where their appreciation is always suspect. Feminism underlines, among other things, the idea of "women novelists", and then says "I told you so" when men accept the distinction and praise them for their womanly achievements.

It is deliberately outrageous to suggest that Charlotte Brontë and George Eliot are not in the best class of women novelists because they are so obviously "women novelists". And yet a distinction can be drawn between women whose art takes for granted and does not exploit femininity, and women who rely on it as much in their art as they do in everyday life. Charlotte Brontë and George Eliot belong to the latter class; Murasaki, Jane Austen, Emily Brontë, Ivy Compton-Burnett, Elizabeth Bowen, Iris Murdoch, Elizabeth Taylor, Bar-

bara Pym to the former. There is no need to pronounce which scale flies up and kicks the heam. In any case many good judges, of both sexes, would more or less violently disagree. Barbara Pym, for instance, lays a deliberate trap for men (the find majority of her readers) by suggesting they are different and absurd. They have their ways of liking this. But Pym employs no "femininity" in her artistic process, only sense and humour, even though her viewpoint is the heroine's. It has been suggested that Iris Murdoch's heroes never shave, and this may also be a trap: many conclusions could be drawn from it. What is certain, however, is that a feminine or masculine viewpoint does not mean a "feminine" type of novel, any more than it means a "masculine" one. It is a convention deliberately employed, not an involuntary dependence by the artist on sex. Perhaps it is best when heroes never shave, nor heroines menstruate. At the moment they do - figuratively speaking - too much of both. No doubt there should always be mansions for the "masculine" and "feminine" novel in the house of fiction, but it may be that the most interesting as well as the most entertaining novels are the ones which give no sense of an author depending on either sexual role.

The hero of Sarah Fielding's *The Adventures of David Simple* is a decidedly Candide-like figure, though the novel, which appeared a few years before Voltaire's book, naturally has no pretensions to his satiric logic and drive. The heroine, Cynthia, is more important, and the interest of the novel lies in her expression of two sides of women's lot: the difficulty of getting properly educated (so many things "were not proper for girls of my age to know") and the everyday risk of being accosted by males when unaccompanied. On a short coach journey Cynthia has trouble with three or four men, one of them a clergyman. She treats it as a routine matter, though a cause for wry moral reflection. Cynthia both resents and takes for granted what, in *Pamela*, becomes the occasion for a whole conventional sequence of gloating suspense, in which Pamela's point of view is certainly sympathized with and entered into, but not seen from the humdrum perspective of everyday inconvenience.

Women novelists, in fact, had not learnt how to lighten and dramatize experience and turn it into forms of "literariness". They had no chance to do so. In *How to Suppress Women's Writing* (1984) Joanna Russ remarks that when the memory of one's predecessors is buried the assumption persists that there were none, and each

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generation of women believes itself to be faced with the burden of doing everything for the first time. And if no one ever did it before, if no woman was ever that socially sacred creature "a great writer", why do we think we can succeed now?

Some of that is true, though time is perhaps a less unjust judge than it implies; plenty of mediocre novels by males have also disappeared into its valley of lost things, while it is difficult to think that any sort of male conspiracy could ever now displace the Brontës or George Eliot or Virginia Woolf from the pantheon. Males might instead be blamed for sanctifying them as token images, thus keeping out a whole flock of worthy, run-of-the-mill women novelists, but then, as we have seen, males can get nothing right in this context. More important is the general point that women novelists tended to remain in an area of indeterminacy, unshaped and unconcluded by a sustaining tradition – except in the most obvious matters like happy endings – and struggling with actual daily experience as best they could.

That does not mean that women were exempt, any more than men were, from writing their novels out of other novels. But they did so, as it were, with less conviction. They did not throw themselves in the wholehearted masculine way into satire and burlesque, moral fable, dialecticism, humour, and all the other time-honoured ingredients. Certainly they went through all the mutations, but their novels often give today the impression that what were to them the most important things were being left out. As indeed they were. But this somewhat mechanical reproduction of the moral fiction and the moral itself is a source of weakness that in Jane Austen would be turned into a great strength. Underlying all the official attention that she gives to the moral sphere, to sensibility, to self-control – title of Mary Brunton's most popular novel – is Jane Austen's sense of what it means to live day by day with two or three families in a village, and her incomparable achievement in converting this sense of things into art. Like great novelists of either sex, Jane Austen shares the Shakespearean capacity to have things both ways, to be at the same time serious and not serious, responsible and irresponsible, and she can do this because the same gift is latent, still-born, in her female peers and predecessors, however much appearances may suggest the contrary.

In spite of her brilliant desire to convince that it was mothers and not fathers who made the novel, Dale Spender ignores some of the most subtle evidence for her thesis, evidence overlooked even in a valuable study like Marilyn Butler's *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas*. No good novelist fails to make use of the war of ideas, any more than Shakespeare himself did, but the true art of the novel is instinctively deadpan about them, and asserts its own tacit independence without belittling them in its scheme of things. Women can do this more naturally than men, as Jane Austen shows, and yet it is in no sense a "feminine" dispensation: Tolstoy's art does it in the same way as hers. "And what were you trying to do in your novel, Miss Austen?" (Or Mrs Smith, or Miss Fielding, or Miss Brunton, or Miss Edgeworth.) The question, so ineptly and so inevitably asked in radio or television interviews today, shows that it is still taken for granted that a novelist will be motivated by his or her purpose and subject, rather than by subduing them into art. We can again deduce from this two clear and simple categories: the novelist who dominates in this way, and the novelist who lets himself (or herself) be dominated. To give way to indignation, infatuation, vanity, self-pity, the sense of injustice, is often the recipe for a "powerful" novel. If you are obsessed with your father, write a novel about it, as Thomas Hardy did in *Mr Nicholas*; if a mother has sat on you for thirty years, or a husband persecuted you for the same period, get it off your chest in a novel. An H. G. Wells makes a similar use of the form to get across his energy and his ideas, and a Henry James finds he can only deprecate the process. For Henry James is the son – more so than he would admit, no doubt – of the novel's mothers. It was the women writers who first nurtured the secret enjoyment, in art, in character, in language, the enjoyment that more than anything else transforms and individualizes its material. "No" – Miss Austen and all the others might

reply to the interviewer – "I was enjoying myself. I was creating a new world" – though of course they had more sense, and sense of humour, than to say any such thing.

Mary Brunton can say it confidentially, however, just as Jane Austen does, in a private letter. Mrs Izett wanted to know how Laura, the heroine of *Self-Control*, was getting along.

Your friend Laura proceeds with a slow but regular pace; a short step every day – no more! She has advanced sixty paces, alias pages, since you left her. She is at present very comfortably situated, if the foolish thing had the sense to think so; she is on a visit to Norwood, where she is to remain for a few days; and a very snug old-fashioned place it is! Though it should never be laid open to the public one day at large you shall see the interior of it one day or other . . . If ever I undertake another lady, I will manage her in a very different manner. Laura is so decently kerkieled, like our grandmothers that to dress her is a work of time and pains. Her young sister, if she ever have one, shall wear loose, floating, easy robes that will slip on in a minute.

As Dale Spender rightly says, we can see why Jane Austen so intently studied the style of *Self-Control*. The tone and the balance are there in the novels, as in the letters, and so is the intimacy with the character. Impossible to imagine Richardson, for all his powers of understanding, writing in this way about Pamela or Clarissa, or having any such sense of them, any more than Fielding had of Tom Jones, or Defoe of Robinson Crusoe. This intimacy is a new thing; and though it is not what Charlotte Brontë felt about Jane Eyre, or Desmond MacCarthy's women novelists about their Robinsons, it is what Tolstoy felt about Natasha and Anna. ("Back to dull old Anna," he groans in a letter.) It is an intimacy which includes love, even self-love, but excludes confidence, self-reverence and self-justification. It is both creation and friendship.

One sign of this is living with the characters all the time, getting them dressed and undressed, from room to room and from district to district. Not an easy thing to do, as Jane Austen and Mary Brunton found, but an essential one in terms of this kind of intimacy. The discovery of how to live with a character was made by the women novelists, though few were able to put it to good use. Mary Brunton died, in childbirth, aged forty. Her second novel, *Discipline*, also a great success, was published in 1814, two years before Jane Austen's *Emma*. It has a father not unlike Mr Woodhouse, except that he lives too much in the world instead of to one side of it. He loses his fortune, commits suicide, and leaves his daughter Ellen in penury. It is much stronger meat than Jane Austen, and yet there are significant resemblances. Mrs Izett was duly informed that "Ellen is at an end. She was finished at three o'clock one morning and I waked Mr B out of his first sleep to hear of her wedding." Mr B, a clergyman like Jane Austen's father, sounds not only an affectionate husband but one who took the right sort of interest in his wife's writing career. Her death, and its circumstances, show how much promise of a similar sort must have come to an untimely end, if not from death then from the circumstances of marriage and a family, as in the case of Jane Austen's own niece.

It was the women novelists, too, who made the first real claims on behalf of the form. Like Jane Austen in *Northanger Abbey*, Mary Brunton claims that the novel is an art as capable of greatness as any other. "I protest, I think a fiction containing a just representation of human beings and of their actions – a connected, interesting and probable story, conducting to a useful and impressive moral lesson – might be one of the greatest efforts of human genius."

wedding bells and a happy ending. The heroine of *Discipline* finds herself immersed in an asylum which probably owes more to the dungeons of the Gothic novel than to the firsthand experience of the author. This is a far cry from Jane Austen advising her own mvel-attempting niece not to accompany her heroine to Ireland, because she knew nothing of the manners there.

"What would an Arabella make of today's romantic fiction?" wonders Sandra Shulman, who introduces Charlotte Lennox's *The Female Quixote*, or *The Adventures of Arabella*, published in 1752. The trouble with this amiable but not very energetic work is that the author makes use of the Quixote formula without having much real interest in it, or the ability to extract from it the bite and amusement which Jane Austen gets when she copies the same sort of thing in *Northanger Abbey*. The idea of confusing the real world with romances is probably as old as reading. Pauline and Francesca make love after reading about Lancelot's exploits, and Emma Bovary has been seduced by romances before she has her affairs with Rodolphe and Léon. An American medical writer in the 1880s was so convinced that romances were rotting the minds of young people that he dismissed the attendant evils of pornography as nugatory in comparison. But one feels that Charlotte Lennox, like Jane Austen after her, had too much common sense to believe anything like this. They are both in the difficult position of portraying a sensible, spirited heroine who puts herself into such illusions, and then comes to recognize their absurdity. Could she in fact have been so silly in the first place? Emma Bovary is another matter: Flaubert is cunning at showing her total and increasing alienation from things. The obvious answer is that only a minute portion of Mills and Boon addicts, in any age, are really affected by what they read, and their hold on their affairs would always be slight anyway. The great majority sensibly distinguish between reading enjoyment, or "escapism", and application to worldly matters.

To the question of the imaginary interviewer all these women would in fact have returned stock, if not solemn, replies. Even Jane Austen might have done so, however much with tongue in cheek. It was vital to women's image and self-respect to assert the serious moral nature of the novel's undertaking, even to write, as Maria Edgeworth did in her preface to the first edition of *Belinda* in 1801: "The following work is offered to the public as a Moral Tale – a Novel." The distinction was between the grave work, worthy of sensible men and women, and the trashy romance, suited only to your flighty miss. But one may wonder whether the moral pretensions were not just a way of saving the appearances, for author and reader alike. If, as seems likely, a Charlotte Lennox, or Maria Edgeworth or a Jane Austen were in fact too sensible to suppose that romances corrupted the youthful mind, why should they have supposed that moral tales would noticeably improve it? The real interest of the novel lay elsewhere, in the characters and situations portrayed, and all good or promising novelists were no doubt secretly aware of it. Even when Sarah Fielding, in *The Lives of Cleopatra and Octavia*, a work much admired by the quality in the 1750s, used the historic couple to portray mindless seductiveness as against the intellectual qualities proper to women she admired, one feels that the propagandist aspect was less important to her than working with two types of women, examples of whom she might have found among her acquaintance and drawn as Jane Austen drew from hers.

But the sadness is, as shown by Dale Spender and by the excellent introductions to the Pandora series of reprints, how frequently promising women writers were blown off course, Jane Austen was exceptionally lucky; and who is to know if even she might not have quietly dropped the novel, as Ann Radcliffe did, and sunk – had she survived – into a mere domestic privacy? Mary Brunton died prematurely, but Fanny Burney lived to eighty-seven and Maria Edgeworth to seventy-one, both having long fulfilled their youthful achievement, and outlived it not necessarily from a decline in talent, but because they allowed their gifts to be channelled in the wrong direction. Here fathers, not husbands,

are the villains of the piece. Both were slayers, not so much, one feels, of their own talent, but from being kind and anxious, wishing to make a row. After the poem *Everina* Fanny Burney was taken in by her family and sent to stay with a friend to whom she would write supervised and "undisciplined" letters. She had become a valuable family property and the result was *Cecilia*, a fine novel, way but too long and not the kind of thing that was really good at. (Cecilia's madness and Harriet's suicide no doubt suggested the events to Mary Brunton when she came to write *Discipline*.) Its popularity was extraordinary, and the wretched Fanny was paid 1786, into becoming one of Queen Charlotte's waiting women – the court connection was just the thing for her father's career. It was the end of her as a novelist, though *Everina* and *The Wanderer* were still to come.

Just as Fanny Burney never developed spontaneous freshness of *Everina*, which came from the way of living and observing that her, so Maria Edgeworth would write her masterpiece like *Castle Rackrent*. Like *Everina* it was essentially a clandestine book, written out of direct observation and without the help of her knowledge. Maria Edgeworth was by nature a comic-satiric writer, whose real job should have been the genially disconcerting of the Irish squirearchy and their hangers-on. But that did not suit father, once he had the potential of his "partner, poet, daughter". She was set to work on *Morville* for children, and on *Belinda*, which, as Figs remarks in her introduction, is "Courtship" novel of the kind that Jane Austen was to bring to perfection: a novel, that is, written in deliberate opposition to the tie fiction and designed to promote the pleasures for a good marriage. It was just the kind for Jane Austen's genius but it did not suit Maria Edgeworth. One leading character, Lady Delcunur, a rascally woman of the world with an unhappy temperamental kind heart, shows that if she had stuck to society Maria Edgeworth might have produced a novel in rival *Samorville and Rose's* *Charlotte*, written a hundred years later.

In some ways Sarah Scott had the largest and most fulfilled life of any of these ladies: she had less talent than the rest. *Melinda Hall* [sic] is a fantasy of wish-fulfilment, a happy colony of enlightened and philanthropic women, disconcerting their talents by practising good works and spending evenings, "the most social part of the day, with any of those excesses which so often turn to senseless revelry". Sarah Scott lived in a fashion with Lady Barbara Montagu, a lady of the trashy romance, suited only to your flighty miss. But one may wonder whether the moral pretensions were not just a way of saving the appearances, for author and reader alike. If, as seems likely, a Charlotte Lennox, or Maria Edgeworth or a Jane Austen were in fact too sensible to suppose that romances corrupted the youthful mind, why should they have supposed that moral tales would noticeably improve it? The real interest of the novel lay elsewhere, in the characters and situations portrayed, and all good or promising novelists were no doubt secretly aware of it. Even when Sarah Fielding, in *The Lives of Cleopatra and Octavia*, a work much admired by the quality in the 1750s, used the historic couple to portray mindless seductiveness as against the intellectual qualities proper to women she admired, one feels that the propagandist aspect was less important to her than working with two types of women, examples of whom she might have found among her acquaintance and drawn as Jane Austen drew from hers.

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Striking the aural icons

James H. Billington

EDWARD V. WILLIAMS

The Bells of Russia: History and technology. 276pp. Guildford: Princeton University Press. £42.50. 0 691 09131 5

This remarkable volume not only throws new light on Russian history, but also illustrates the value in humanistic research of dogged diligence in the pursuit of a single subject. By tracking down the physical history of bells from their obscure origins in antiquity to the creation of the world's largest bells in early modern Russia, a professor of music from the heartland of America takes us closer to the heart of Russia than many of the pseudo-sages who pontificate on the periphery about general political questions.

Edward Williams's story begins with the silver trumpet (*hazzereth*) taken by the Jews from the tabernacle at Sinai to the Temple in Jerusalem and transposed into an instrument (*signum*) of convocation by the early desert fathers of Christianity. That instrument could be either a trumpet or a hammer-blow on a cell door, but gave way by the early sixth century in Byzantium to the striking of a wooden board (*senanton*).

At that very time, metal bells were coming into use in Western Europe (possibly beginning, like so much else, in Ireland with riveted bells). There was a bell tower over the old basilica of St Peter's by the eighth century; bells were in general use in Western village churches by the ninth; and bells appear to have moved independently from the West directly to Kievan Rus in the following century. It was apparently the Latin occupation of Constantinople at the beginning of the thirteenth century that led to the general use of bells in Byzantium. Those bells fell silent when the Muslim Turks overran the Second Rome in 1453; but this event was merely the prelude to a new golden age of bell-casting and bell-ringing in Moscow, the Third Rome; and this period – from the late fifteenth to the early eighteenth century – is the heart of Professor Williams's story.

Once again, the foreign influences were more Western than Byzantine; but, unlike Western bells, characteristic Russian bells did not move and were not conceived as tuned, musical instruments. Although their clappers, decoration and much of their basic shape were European, Russian bells were rung in a modified Byzantine manner by striking the immovable object with the clapper (from within, however, rather than outside the bell). But the mounting, the size, the bronze composition, and the awesome sonic ideal of the great bells of Russia resemble too great temple bells of Buddhist Asia. Future research on the subject will, one hopes, explore more fully this tantalizing hint of a deeply Eastern influence on Russia, which is suggested but not really investigated here.

The bells forged in the Moscow Caon Yard beginning in the early sixteenth century were often personified ("the bear" or "the swan") and sometimes even flogged or exiled to Siberia like people. They seem also to have required a kind of ritual equivalent of the human essentialia of food, clothing and shelter. They were "fed" (in a sense born) in the great ritual of mixing and pouring molten metal into a mould within the earth – a process which Williams fully illustrates with diagrams and brings to life with eyewitness descriptions. The bells came to be "clothed" increasingly with decorative inscriptions, and were given "homes" in the bell towers that became one of the most magnificent and characteristic features of Russian architecture.

The "baro" from among the large number of bells that the great "Tsar-Kolokol", the giant, 217-ton bell that still stands in the Kremlin and is – by far – the largest bell ever made. He traces the bell through four separate incarnations between the one originally commissioned by Tsar Boris Godunov in 1599 and the one finally completed by Empress Anna in 1735 – how a ship weighing thirteen tons fell off in 1737, and how the bell was finally raised up a century later from the earth into which it had sunk, with

the interior consecrated as a chapel in 1836.

Though beautifully produced, well illustrated and clearly written, Williams's book poses problems for the general reader of a kind that is hard to avoid when one is trying definitively to reconstruct the complex history of a material object. Much of the most interesting material is in the rich footnotes, much of the discussion in the text is too dense and detailed for anyone but specialists. The fascinating question of the role of bells in Russian religious ritual and Russian culture more generally has been deferred to a second volume – in which one will hope to find a fuller description of the actual sounds made by these omnipresent "aural icons" in Old Russia.

Williams's final chapters describe the last of the gigantic Russian bells (cast in the mid-eighteenth century by the Empress Elisabeth for the Uspensky Cathedral in the Moscow Kremlin and for the Monastery of St Sergius and the Holy Trinity in Zagorsk) and the continued importance of bells and the bell shape as "bronze avatars of a religio-political ideology", down to their silencing and partial destruction in the Soviet era.

The details of the history of the great bells that Williams has reconstructed here so admirably suggest a fuller and more intimate relationship with the ideology of imperial Russia than he has altogether developed. The great bells had a messianic as well as a ceremonial function – designed to suggest the trumpets of the Last Judgment as well as to provide a call to worship. The building and upward extension of the great bell tower of Ivan the Great in the Kremlin was not unrelated to the developing vision of that citadel in Moscow as the "living icon" of the New Jerusalem in the late sixteenth century. (There were to be twelve gates, as prescribed in the Book of Revelation.) The story of the giant bells should surely have been extended geographically and chronologically to include the great and elaborately inscribed bell placed in the late nineteenth century in the bell tower in the Russian convent overlooking Jerusalem on the Mount of Olives, where the Second Coming was expected even as Russian power was being projected into the Holy Lands.

The story of Russian bells also seems to run in close parallel with the history of Russia's greatest sufferings; and this, too, is a theme that one hopes to see developed in the second volume. Williams suggests in various places that a "crescendo" in bell-casting and ringing occurred under Tsar Alexis Mikhailovich; that the largest bell actually rung in Russia was the Tsar-Kolokol at that Tsar's recast it (for a second time) in 1655; and that the same Tsar escalated the decoration on bells to include pictures of the rulers and such messianic proclamations as "the spiritual trumpets of a new Israel". All of this occurred at a time of immense human suffering: a war of unprecedented bloodiness with Poland, the onset of the worst epidemic of the Black Plague, and a series of violent social convulsions beginning with urban unrest and ending in the Stenka Razin uprising and great schism in the Russian church. The great *zvonn* that so deafened and fascinated foreign visitors at that time was playing to econtpoint, it would appear, to a chorus of human cries.

But the bells clearly were also an expression of the collective aspirations as well as the collective labour of the Russian people. The efforts of Peter the Great to replace them with musical carillons, of Catherine the Great to introduce chimes playing "Ach du lieber Augustin" and of various leaders (including Soviet ones) periodically to try to draw on their appeal by presenting the public with tuneless clocks or broadcast chimes of their own – all this seems like a false intrusion into a chorus of bass voices. One hopes that the publication (since Williams's work appeared) of a collective volume by Soviet scholars on bells (*Kolokola. Istoria i sovremennost'*, Nizhny, 1985) may presage some new scholarly interest in the Soviet Union in the history of a great Russian tradition that has been rendered nearly extinct by Soviet cultural commissars. If so, they – like everyone else – will have to begin with this outstanding work, which has provided the "material basis" for all future study of the subject and reconstructed an all-but-forgotten chapter in the technological ingenuity of the Russian people.



Drawing of Tsar-Kolokol, c1809, from the book reviewed on this page.

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generation of women believes itself to be faced with the burden of doing everything for the first time. And if no one ever did it before, if no woman was ever that socially sacred creature "a great writer" why do we think we can succeed now?

Some of that is true, though time is perhaps a less unjust judge than it implies; plenty of mediocre novels by males have also disappeared into its valley of lost things, while it is difficult to think that any sort of male conspiracy could ever now displace the Brontës or George Eliot or Virginia Woolf from the pantheon. Males might instead be blamed for sanctifying them as taken images, thus keeping out a whole flock of worthy, run-of-the-mill women novelists, but then, as we have seen, males can get nothing right in this context. More important is the general point that women novelists tended to remain in an area of indeterminacy, unshaped and uncondemned by a sustaining tradition – except in the most obvious matters like happy endings – and struggling with actual daily experience as best they could.

That does not mean that women were exempt, any more than men were, from writing their novels out of other novels. But they did so, as it were, with less conviction. They did not throw themselves in the wholehearted masculine way into satire and burlesque, moral fable, didacticism, humour, and all the other time-honoured ingredients. Certainly they went through all the mutations, but their novels often give today the impression that what were to them the most important things were being left out. As indeed they were. But this somewhat mechanical reproduction of the moral fiction and the moral itself is a source of weakness that in Jane Austen would be turned into a great strength. Underlying all the official attention that she gives to the moral sphere, to sensibility, to self-control – title of Mary Brunton's most popular novel – is Jane Austen's sense of what it means to live day by day with two or three families in a village, and her incomparable achievement in converting this sense of things into art. Like great novelists of either sex, Jane Austen shares the Shakespearean capacity to have things both ways, to be at the same time serious and not serious, responsible and irresponsible, and she can do this because the same gift is latent, still-born, in her female peers and predecessors, however much appearances may suggest the contrary.

In spite of her militant desire to convince that it was mothers and not fathers who made the novel, Dale Spender ignores some of the most subtle evidence for her thesis, evidence overlooked even to a valuable study like Marilyn Butler's *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas*. No good novelist fails to make use of the war of ideas, any more than Shakespeare himself did, but the true art of the novel is instinctively deadpan about them, and asserts its own tacit independence without belittling them in its scheme of things. Women can do this more naturally than men, as Jane Austen shows, and yet it is in no sense a "feminine" dispensation: Tolstoy's art does it to the same way as hers.

"And what were you trying to do in your novel, Miss Austen?" (Or Mrs Smith, or Miss Fielding, or Miss Brunton, or Miss Edgeworth.) The question, so ineptly and so inevitably asked in radio or television interviews today, shows that it is still taken for granted that a novelist will be motivated by his or her purpose and subject, rather than by subduing them into art. We can again deduce from this two clear and simple categories: the novelist who dominates to this way, and the novelist who lets himself (or herself) be dominated. To give way to indignation, infatuation, vanity, self-pity, the sense of injustice, is often the recipe for a "powerful" novel. If you are obsessed with your father, write a novel about it, as Thomas Hardy did in *Mr Nicholas*; if a mother has sat on you for thirty years, or a husband persecuted you for the same period, get it off your chest to a novel. An H. G. Wells makes a similar use of the form to get across his energy and his ideas, and a Henry James finds he can only deprecate the process. For Henry James is the son – more so than he would admit – of the novel's mothers. It was the women writers who first nurtured the novel's enjoyment, its art, its character, its language: the enjoyment that more than anything else transforms and individualizes its material. "No," Miss Austen and all the others might

reply to the interviewer – "I was enjoying myself. I was creating a new world" – though of course they had more sense, and sense of humour, than to say any such thing.

Mary Brunton can say it confidentially, however, just as Jane Austen does, in a private letter. Mrs Izett wanted to know how Laura, the heroine of *Self Control*, was getting along.

Your friend Laura proceeds with a slow but regular pace; a short step every day – no more! She has advanced sixty pages, alias pages, since you left her. She is at present very comfortably situated, if the foolish thing had the sense to think so; she is on a visit to Norwood, where she is to remain for a few days; and a very snug old-fashioned place it is! Though it should never be laid open to the public one day at large you shall see the interior of it one day or other. . . . If ever I undertake another book, I will manage her in a very different manner. Laura is so decidedly kerchieved, like our grandmothers, that to dress her is a work of time and pains. Her young sister, if she ever have one, shall wear loose, flowing, easy robes that will slip on in a minute.

As Dale Spender rightly says, we can see why Jane Austen so intently studied the style of *Self-Control*. The tone and the balance are there in the novels, as in the letters, and so is the intimacy with the character. Impossible to imagine Richardson, for all his powers of understanding, writing in this way about Pamela or Clarissa, or having any such sense of them, any more than Fielding had of Tom Jones, or Defoe of Robinson Crusoe. This intimacy is a new thing; and though it is not what Charlotte Brontë felt about Jane Eyre, or Desmond MacCarthy's women novelists about their Rabbits, it is what Tolstoy felt about Natasha and Ann, ("Back to dull old Anna", he groans in a letter.) It is an intimacy which includes love, even self-love, but excludes confidingness, self-reverence and self-justification. It is both creation and friendship.

One sign of this is living with the characters all the time, getting them dressed and undressed, from room to room and from district to district. Not an easy thing to do, as Jane Austen and Mary Brunton found, but an essential one in terms of this kind of intimacy. The discovery of how to live with a character was made by the women novelists, though few were able to put it to good use. Mary Brunton died, in childbirth, aged forty. Her second novel, *Discipline*, also a great success, was published in 1814, two years before Jane Austen's *Emma*. It has a father not unlike Mr Woodhouse, except that he lives too much in the world instead of to one side of it. He loses his fortune, commits suicide, and leaves his daughter Ellen in penury. It is much stronger meat than Jane Austen, and yet there are significant resemblances. Mrs Izett was duly informed that "Ellen is at an end. She was finished at three o'clock one morning and I walked Mr B out of his first sleep to hear of her wedding." Mr B, a clergyman like Jane Austen's father, sounds not only an affectionate husband but one who took the right sort of interest in his wife's writing career. Her death, and his circumstances, show how much promise of a similar sort must have come to an untimely end, if not from death then from the circumstances of marriage and a family, as in the case of Jane Austen's own niece.

It was the women novelists, too, who made the first real claims on behalf of the form. Like Jane Austen in *Northanger Abbey*, Mary Brunton claims that the novel is an art as capable of greatness as any other. "I protest, I think a fiction containing a just representation of human beings and of their actions – a connected, interesting and probable story, conducing to a useful and impressive moral lesson – might be one of the greatest efforts of human genius." Jane Austen of course would never have said such a thing in a letter, and her comments in *Northanger Abbey* have the stylized touch of her own kind of irony. She is alone among these ladies in not taking herself and her writings all that seriously – or at least not seeming to – but the fact remains that both she and Mary Brunton were making a claim whose truth would not be taken for granted for another hundred years or so. On the other hand most of the mothers of the novel were not, like Jane Austen, realists when it came to subject-matter. Towards the end of *Self-Control* Laura is abducted and the action transferred to America, where Indians appear, and the heroine is only just got back in time for

wedding bells and a happy ending. The heroine of *Discipline* finds herself immured in an asylum which probably owes more to the dungeons of the Gothic novel than to the first-hand experience of the author. This is a far cry from Jane Austen advising her own novel-attempting niece not to accompany her heroine to Ireland, because she knew nothing of the manners there.

"What would an Arabella make of today's romantic fiction?" wonders Sandra Shulman, who introduces Charlotte Lennox's *The Female Quixote*, or *The Adventures of Arabella*, published in 1752. The trouble with this amiable but not very energetic work is that the author makes use of the Quixote formula without having much real interest in it, or the ability to extract from it the bite and amusement which Jane Austen gets when she copies the same sort of thing in *Northanger Abbey*. The idea of confusing the real world with romances is probably as old as reading. Paolo and Francesca make love after reading about Lancelot's exploits, and Emma Bovary has been seduced by romances before she has her affairs with Rodolphe and Léon. An American medical writer in the 1880s was so convinced that romances were rotting the minds of young people that he dismissed the attendant evils of pornography as nugatory in comparison. But one feels that Charlotte Lennox, like Jane Austen after her, had too much common sense to believe anything like this. They are both in the difficult position of portraying a sensible, spirited heroine who puts herself into such illusions, and then comes to recognize their absurdity. Could she in fact have been so silly in the first place? Emma Bovary is another matter: Flaubert is cunning at showing her total and increasing alienation from things. The obvious answer is that only a minute portion of Mills and Boon addicts, in any age, are really affected by what they read, and their hold on their affairs would always be slight anyway. The great majority sensibly distinguish between reading enjoyment, or "escapism", and application to worldly matters.

To the question of the imaginary interviewer all these women would in fact have returned stock, if not solemn, replies. Even Jane Austen might have done so, however much with tongue in cheek. It was vital to women's image and self-respect to assert the serious moral nature of the novel's undertaking, even to write, as Maria Edgeworth did in her preface to the first edition of *Belinda* in 1801: "The following work is offered to the public as a Moral Tale – the author not wishing to acknowledge a Novel." The distinction was between the grave work, worthy of sensible men and women, and the trashy romance, suited only to your flighty miss. But one may wonder whether the moral pretensions were not just a way of saving the appearances, for author and reader alike. If, as seems likely, a Charlotte Lennox, a Maria Edgeworth or a Jane Austen were in fact too sensible to suppose that romances corrupted the youthful mind, why should they have supposed that moral tales would noticeably improve it? The real interest of the novel lay elsewhere, in the characters and situations portrayed, and all good or promising novelists were no doubt secretly aware of it. Even when Sarah Fielding, in *The Lives of Cleopatra and Octavia*, a work much admired by the quality in the 1750s, used the historic couple to portray mindless self-indulgence as against the intellectual qualities proper to women she admired, one feels that the propaganda aspect was less important to her than working with two types of women, examples of whom she might have found among her acquaintance and drawn as Jane Austen drew from hers.

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Just as Fanny Burney never developed the spontaneous freshness of *Everina*, which came from the way of living and observing that suited her, so Maria Edgeworth would write no more masterpieces like *Castle Rackrent*. Like *Everina* it was essentially a clandestine book, written out of direct observation and without the family's knowledge. Maria Edgeworth was by nature a comic-satiric writer, whose real subject should have been the genially dissolute manners of the Irish squirearchy and their hangers-on. But that did not suit father, once he found out the potential of his "partner, pupil and daughter". She was set to work on *Moral Tales*, for children, and on *Belinda*, which, as Eva Figgis remarks in her introduction, is a "Courtship" novel of the kind that Jane Austen was to bring to perfection: a novel, that is to say, written in deliberate opposition to romantic fiction and designed to promote the preliminaries for a good marriage. It was just the thing for Jane Austen's genius but it did not suit Maria Edgeworth. One leading character in it, Lady Delacour, a rakish woman of the smart world with an unhappy temperament and a kind heart, shows that if she had stuck to Irish society Maria Edgeworth might have produced a novel to rival Somerville and Ross's *The Real Charlotte*, written a hundred years later.

In some ways Sarah Scott had the happiest and most fulfilled life of any of these ladies, but she had less talent than the rest. *Millennium Hall* [sic] is a fantasy of wish-fulfilment, a happy colony of enlightened and philanthropic women, discovering their talents together, practising good works and spending their evenings, "the most social part of the day, without any of those excesses which so often turn it into senseless revelry". Sarah Scott lived in this fashion with Lady Barbara Montagu, a fellow bluestocking who had rescued her from an unhappy marriage, until the latter's death in 1765. Millennium Hall, the idyllic ménage in which live six ladies, most of whom can be recognized from among Sarah Scott's acquaintance, carries a faint foretaste of the much more cunning symbolism of Mansfield Park, but it is based on hope and amiability rather than on sharpness and observation. Sarah Scott lived long enough to recoil from a more revolutionary feminism, observing in 1794 a young woman "of uncommon talents" at a political debate in Norwich, "who made a long speech at the Town Hall to about 1500 of the Jacobins assembled against Mr Wyndham [a Whig MP] and two daughters of a late Doctor of Divinity stood one on each side of her to encourage her in her proceeding". That has a very contemporary flavour about it.

But the novels themselves belong inexorably to the past. Enthralling they are no longer, although General Kutuzov might, I suppose, have found distraction from the battle of Borodino in any one of them. What is certain is that they are worth reprinting, in this elegant and readable format, and worth studying, for their own sake and for the sake of a proper historical view of the novel's past and development.

Women's Poetry Index by Patricia A. Guy (174pp. Oryx Press; distributed in the UK by Clio Press. £56.50, 0.89774 173 0) is a reference book covering fifty-one anthologies of women poets. Containing Bradstreet, Plath, Akhmatova and a host of lesser-known names, the index of poets ranges from Cate Abbe, author of the poem "Khamar Women", to Nandi Zimela-Kelita, from the plume of Michalla MelMichael.

Striking the aural icons

James H. Billington

EDWARD V. WILLIAMS
The Bells of Russia: History and Technology.
276pp. Guildford: Princeton University Press.
£42.90.
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At that very time, metal bells were coming into use in Western Europe (possibly beginning, like so much else, in Ireland with riveted bells). There was a bell tower over the old basilica of St Peter's by the eighth century; bells were in general use in Western village churches by the ninth; and bells appear to have moved independently from the West directly to Kievan Rus in the following century. It was apparently the Latin occupation of Constantinople at the beginning of the thirteenth century that led to the general use of bells in Byzantium. Those bells fell silent when the Muslim Turks overran the Second Rome in 1453; but this event was merely the prelude to a new golden age of bell-casting and bell-ringing in Moscow, the Third Rome; and this period – from the late fifteenth to the early eighteenth century – is the heart of Professor Williams's story.

Once again, the foreign influences were more Western than Byzantine; but, unlike Western bells, characteristic Russian bells did not move and were not conceived as tuned, musical instruments. Although their clappers, decoration and much of their basic shape were European, Russian bells were rung in a modified Byzantine manner by striking the immovable object with the clapper (from within, however, rather than outside the bell). But the mounting, the size, the bronze composition, and the awesome sonic ideal of the great bells of Russia resemble the great temple bells of Buddhist Asia. Future research on the subject will, one hopes, explore more fully this tantalizing hint of a deeply Eastern influence on Russia, which is suggested but not really investigated here.

The bells forged in the Moscow Canon Yard beginning in the early sixteenth century were often personified ("the bear" or "the swan") and sometimes even flogged or exiled to Siberia like people. They seem also to have required a kind of ritual equivalent of the human essentials of food, clothing and shelter. They were "fed" (in a sense born) in the great ritual of mixing and pouring molten metal into a mould within the earth – a process which Williams fully illustrates with diagrams and brings to life with eyewitness descriptions. The bells came to be "clothed" increasingly with decorative inscriptions, and were given "homes" in the bell towers that became one of the most magnificent and characteristic features of Russian architecture.

The "hero" from among the large number of bells that Williams describes in fascinating detail is the great "Tsar-Kolokol", the giant, 217-ton bell that still stands in the Kremlin and is by far – the largest bell ever made. He traces the bell through four separate incarnations between the one originally commissioned by Tsar Boris Godunov in 1599 and the one finally completed by Empress Anna in 1735 – how a chip weighing thirteen tons fell off in 1737, and how the bell was finally raised up a century later from the earth into which it had sunk; with

the interior consecrated as a chapel in 1836.

Though beautifully produced, well illustrated and clearly written, Williams's book poses problems for the general reader of a kind that is hard to avoid when one is trying definitively to reconstruct the complex history of a material object. Much of the most interesting material is in the rich footnotes, much of the discussion in the text is too dense and detailed for anyone but specialists. The fascinating question of the role of bells in Russian religious ritual and Russian culture more generally has been deferred to a second volume – in which one will hope to find a fuller description of the actual sounds made by these omnipresent "aural icons" in Old Russia.

Williams's final chapters describe the last of the gigantic Russian bells (cast in the mid-eighteenth century by the Empress Elisabeth for the Uspensky Cathedral in the Moscow Kremlin and for the Monastery of St Sergius and the Holy Trinity in Zagorsk) and the continued importance of bells and the bell shape as "bronze avatars of a religio-political ideology", down to their silencing and partial destruction in the Soviet era.

The details of the history of the great bells that Williams has reconstructed here so admirably suggest a fuller and more intimate relationship with the ideology of imperial Russia than he has altogether developed. The great bells had a messianic as well as a ceremonial function – designed to suggest the trumpets of the Last Judgment as well as to provide a call to worship. The building and upward extension of the great bell tower of Ivan the Great in the Kremlin was not unrelated to the developing vision of that citadel in Moscow as the "living icon" of the New Jerusalem in the late sixteenth century. (There were to be twelve gates, as prescribed in the Book of Revelation.) The story of the giant bells should surely have been extended geographically and chronologically to include the great and elaborately inscribed bell placed in the late nineteenth century in the bell tower in the Russian convent overlooking Jerusalem on the Mount of Olives, where the Second Coming was expected even as Russian power was being projected into the Holy Lands.

The story of Russian bells also seems to run in close parallel with the history of Russia's greatest sufferings; and this, too, is a theme that one hopes to see developed in the second volume. Williams suggests in various places that a "crescendo" in bell-casting and ringing occurred under Tsar Alexis Mikhailovich; that the largest bell actually rung in Russia was the Tsar-Kolokol after that Tsar recast it (for a second time) in 1655; and that the same Tsar escalated the decoration on bells to include pictures of the rulers and such messianic proclamations as "the spiritual trumpets of a new Israel". All of this occurred at a time of immense human suffering: a war of unprecedented bloodiness with Poland, the onset of the worst epidemic of the Black Plague, and a series of violent social convulsions beginning with urban unrest and ending in the Stenka Razin uprising and great schism in the Russian church. The great *zvonn* that so deafened and fascinated foreign visitors at that time was playing in counterpoint, it would appear, to a chorus of human cries.

But the bells clearly were also an expression of the collective aspirations as well as the collective labour of the Russian people. The efforts of Peter the Great to replace them with musical carillons, of Catherine the Great to introduce chimes playing "Ach du lieber Augustin" and of various leaders (including Soviet ones) periodically to try to draw on their appeal by presenting the public with tuneless clocks or broadcast chimes of their own – all this seems like a false intrusion into a chorus of bass voices. One hopes that the publication (since Williams's work appeared) of a collective volume by Soviet scholars on bells (*Kolokol. Istoria i sovremennost*, Nauka, 1985) may preserve some new scholarly interest in the Soviet Union in the history of a great Russian tradition that has been rendered nearly extinct by Soviet cultural commissars. If so, they – like everyone else – will have to begin with this outstanding work, which has provided the "material base" for all future study of the subject and reconstructed an all-but-forgotten chapter in the technological ingenuity of the Russian people.



Drawing of Tsar-Kolokol, c1809, from the book reviewed on this page.

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Getting organized

Ronald Dore

ANDREW GORDON
The Evolution of Labor Relations in Japan:
Heavy Industry, 1853-1955
524pp. Harvard University Press. £21.25.
0674 271300

The mysteries of the Japanese employment system – the "lifetime commitment", the seniority wage and promotion system, the enterprise unions and enterprise wage bargaining in an annual "Spring Offensive" – excite a good deal of attention. And in Britain never more than now when the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Nigel Lawson, is promoting profit-sharing schemes whose proponents often claim that "Japan has shown the way". The "learn from Japan" movement has swept the business schools – the American business schools at least. In Britain managers are much more likely to be dismissive. "How can you hope to transplant Japanese practices rooted in a bizarrely unique culture to a country like Britain with totally different traditions?"

Andrew Gordon's *The Evolution of Labor Relations in Japan* should effectively kill the idea that Japanese employment practices are in any sense a direct carry-over of traditional practices. His admirably detailed yet readable study delves into the minutiae of labour relations in the heavy industry of the Yokohama area from the very beginnings until the final consolidation of the post-war settlement – the institutionalization of what we know today as the Japanese employment system.

Using the record of five shipbuilding, heavy engineering and steel firms (preserved in the remarkable detail which is, perhaps, a culturally determined characteristic) he describes graphically the rough, tough, impersonal, market-contracted, adversarial nature of the sort of wage-effort bargains which were struck in this labour market in the early decades of the century – and, he would argue, against most received opinion, in large measure until the end of the war in 1945. There was little question of loyalty, of the enterprise as community, except in the rhetoric of factory owners as they defended their profits with the argument that the "fine customs and noble traditions" of Japan made protective factory legislation unnecessary.

But, first, the difficulty employers had in retaining skilled workers in boom periods when poaching was rife and wages shot up, and second, the upsurge to labour unrest during the inflationary boom of the First World War – and especially after the Russian Revolution – began to change things. The process of transformation was long drawn out. Vanguard companies started pension schemes in the prosperous early 1920s, rationalized their wage scales, gave regular guaranteed increases, gave blue-collar workers bonuses paralleling (if always smaller than) those of white-collar workers, recognized union negotiating rights, created factory councils with elected worker representatives to deal with grievances and even to discuss recruitment, promotion policies and wage structures. But they were not always followed by their competitors and, with the advent of the depression and pressure on profits, even they retreated. Exhausted pension funds were not supplemented, workers were sacked, union demands for generous severance bonuses were spurned, wages regressed towards straight piecework payments, union leaders were dismissed as agitators. By the early 1930s, managerial authority was no longer under threat, owing very largely to police repression of the left-wing leaders who had threatened it.

The evolution of the Japanese employment system got its next formative stimulus from the wartime mobilization which became steadily more intense after the start of the China War in 1937 and moved into a new gear after 1941. Labour direction confirmed the shift towards permanent employment. As living standards fell drastically towards the war's end, wages became increasingly dominated by family allowances – status rather than performance principles. Under pressure from egalitarian bureaucrats concerned to maximize commitment (to the war effort) and police mediation in surprisingly frequent lock-out disputes – the status gap and the rewards gap between white-collar

staff and blue-collar workers was narrowed. (The process, known as "harmonization", is now under way in British industry.)

Gordon is disinclined to believe that these wartime measures had very much real impact. If workers co-operated it was their patriotism that was appealed to, not any kind of commitment to the firm. But he makes it clear that the wartime rhetoric of the enterprise as community set the agenda for the new-born militant unions which rapidly dominated demoralized managements in the early years of the Occupation. Economic devastation gave added force to the demand for need-based, age-related wages and to priority for absolute job security. The merging of staff and blue-collar unions set the seal on "harmonization". Union power en-

forced the transition from "employer benevolence" welfare to work-community-controlled "welfare corporatism" – benefits drawn as of right.

And so to the last act – managers' recovery of confidence as the Occupation took an increasingly anti-union stance at the end of the 1940s. The roll-back of the Red Purge ended union control over production, business strategy and work organization. It created co-operative unions prepared to reinforce commitment to the enterprise (but still capable, on occasion, of independent action – witness the four-year delay in Nissan's plans to move to Newcastle). But it left intact the employment system which the post-war years had produced.

Gordon tells the story lucidly and well,



A fireman's coat in stencil-dyed leather from the Meiji period, reproduced from Mingei: Japanese Folk Art from the Brooklyn Museum Collection (190pp. Universe Books, 381 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10018. 087663 881 7).

Fast forward

W. G. Beasley

MARIUS B. JANSEN and GILBERT ROZMAN
(Editors)
Japan in Transition: From Tokugawa to Meiji
485pp. Guilford: Princeton University Press.
£34.10.
0691 054592
HARA MATSUKATA REISCHAUER
Samurai and Silk: A Japanese and American Heritage
317pp. Harvard University Press. £16.95.
0674 788001

Between 1850 and 1970 Japan went through a process of historical development that in Europe took over 300 years. It began with a society commonly described as feudal (there are reservations about the meaning of the term), passed through a phase of industry and empire, then launched into a startlingly rapid economic growth now characterized as post-industrial. So eventual a period has inevitably aroused interest and controversy among historians, both Japanese and foreign. They have in recent years concerned themselves in particular with the first phase of Japanese modernization, which took place just before and during the reign of the Meiji emperor (1867-1912). Both the books reviewed here have their main focus on this period.

One of them, *Japan in Transition*, is a book for scholars. That is to say, it sets out to take a fresh look at the transition from feudalism to capitalism, using the methods of the social sciences and quantitative analysis, rather than those of political and diplomatic history. It is a compendium of articles deriving from workshops and a conference held in 1981-2. Like most such books it is a little uneven in quality, though not unacceptably so. It is also less novel than one might have hoped. True, there is much that is new and interesting. Eleanor Westney's "organisational" study of the army and navy, Akira Hayami on population growth, Osamu Saito on the rural economy, and Susan B. Hanley's examination of material culture, all have originality of approach as well

as detail. Other articles are of value less for their conclusions than for the comments they make in the course of reaching them: Marius B. Jansen on the ruling class, Gilbert Rozman on the transformation of the castle towns, Kozo Yamamura on land-tax reform. There are also useful contributions on government (both central and local), social organizations (including education and the press), urbanization and living standards.

One is left, however, with a sense that worthwhile questions have been asked, not that significant answers have been found. Indeed, at the most general level these studies do little more than demonstrate that timing and extent of change varied greatly from one part of Japan to another and in different aspects of Japanese society. This is persuasive, but not surprising. And one could hardly expect more: the very use of the concept "transition" implies that the terminus a quo and terminus ad quem of the argument are to be assumed, rather than discussed.

The general reader, lacking the detailed knowledge which can furnish a wider framework for these analyses, would do well to turn to Hara Matsukata Reischauer's *Samurai and Silk*. It is by comparison methodologically old-fashioned, being in the tradition of life-and-times biography and anecdotal narrative. It is, on the other hand, much more readable. It also includes – piecemeal – an account of Japan's political and economic development, which, though often bland and academically unadventurous, adheres comfortably to the line of accepted history.

What gives *Samurai and Silk* a special value is that it approaches the story of modern Japan through that of Mrs Reischauer's own family. This has made possible the use of family records not only to give point and liveliness to much of what she writes, but also, because of the particular strands of lineage that came together in her parents' generation, to demonstrate some of the central realities of Japanese modernization. Her parental grandfather was Matsukata Masayoshi, a low-ranking samurai from Satsuma, whose ability and loyalist record brought the reward of high office in the

drawing on a wide range of sources from workers' magazines to police records, and he enlivens the narrative with vivid quotations. He stresses, as Tom Smith has done in parallel work recently published, how much the importance workers attached to dignity as well as cash and security contributed to "harmonization" and the enterprise-community concept. And he shows why there never could have been an occupational basis, much less a class basis, rather than an enterprise basis, for Japanese unionism.

It is also a book with a thesis. Previous writers (especially the present reviewer) have tended, he suggests, to misrepresent the development of the Japanese system as the work of clever managers, MacGregorite Y-theorists, convinced of the efficiency of benevolence and trust. Instead, Gordon would argue, the dominant mode of management remained, until 1945, reliance on "incentive wages, strict rules, and unimpeded exercise of authority". Only when resurgent unions forced change after the war did they reluctantly acquiesce in the construction of a new order – out of weakness rather than cleverness.

Why did the Whigs support the Reform Bill? Cleverness? Weakness? Proof is difficult in such matters, and to be fully convicting Gordon would have had to go much more fully into the role of the bureaucracy, the police and the Conciliation Society in the 1920s; he would have had to explain why the "dual structure" of wages becomes discernible from the early 1930s; he would have had to look closely at the process of separation of management and control in large companies and ask not just about wage-earners' share in the firm's revenue, but also who were the profit-takers and how much profit they were taking.

But that would have left him less time for his splendid account of worker aspirations and organization. It is an account which adds significantly and originally to the literature available in Japanese as well as in English.

Meiji period. Most famous as the Finance Minister whose anti-inflationary policy in the early 1880s prepared the way for stable industrial growth, he became successively prime minister, elder statesman, prince. He was the longest lived of the Meiji leaders, dying in 1924. Her maternal grandfather, Arai Hakuseki, was the younger son of a well-to-do village headman in what is now Gumma prefecture. As a non-samurai from a Tokugawa region he had little expectation of political advancement in the early Meiji period. Instead, he turned to the silk business. His elder brother became a major figure in the introduction of modern techniques into silk production in Gumma. Rikichiro himself left for the United States in 1876, building a successful agency to handle the direct export of Japanese silk to America (bypassing the Western merchants who had established a virtual monopoly of the trade to the Japanese treaty ports).

These two men, whose careers are the central subject of the book, epitomize two essential elements in Japan's creation of a modern state: a samurai world of Western-style government, using largely European models to achieve political unity and military strength; and a commoner's world of business, influenced by American ways and much concerned with the American trade, which was able to provide the wealth that made such strength attainable. Their relationship by marriage exemplifies an important social condition of success. The Meiji transformation was led by groups from within the former feudal class. In large part, however, it rested on the ability of those groups to reconcile men who were left aside in the process – mostly, the nobility – and to recruit members to the ruling elite who would be able to meet the need for new kinds of expertise. The marriage links of the Matsukata family, and the family photographs in this volume, demonstrate how it was done. What is more, the chapters in which Mrs Reischauer describes her own life and that of her closer relatives underline the importance of the human heritage – the "wab" society, Frank Gibney called it – which this generation bequeathed to mid twentieth-century Japan.

Adversaries in the economy

Vernon Bogdanor

PETER HAIN
Political Strikes: The state of trade unionism in Britain
357pp. Viking. £14.95.
067806013

What is the role of trade unions in an advanced industrial society? To what extent is that role "industrial" and to what extent "political"? And are the unions still, as Ernest Bevin optimistically declared to the 1937 Trades Union Congress Conference, "an integral part of the state"? These are the questions raised, but hardly resolved, by Peter Hain in his tendentious polemic, *Political Strikes*. His intention, as he disarmingly states in his preface, "is to provide a readable, popular political analysis, rather than a text for theorists or connoisseurs of labour history. Inevitably, therefore, it skates over complex issues of debate." *Political Strikes* is dedicated to the thesis that the British trade union movement is more sinned against than sinning, and, more specifically, that the decisive factor in transforming strikes into major political conflicts has been "intervention in industrial relations by government and agencies of the state – the legal system, the police and the military – rather than the stance of the unions".

In his zeal to promote a one-sided thesis, Hain tends to ignore the historical background of trade unionism; and it is worth recalling here something of its origins and early development. In August 1906, Sir Edward Carson, speaking for the Conservative Opposition, summed up the consequences of the Liberal Government's Trade Disputes Act, exempting trade unions from all actions for tort "in contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute". In Britain, he declared, "the King can do no wrong; neither can a trade union". Until 1980, Britain was almost unique among democratic countries in the scope and scale of the legal

immunities which the trade unions enjoyed. By contrast with much of the Continent, where the rights of unions were to be secured through positive legislation by the State, British trade unions expected government to play a largely negative role, confining itself to securing the basic right to free collective bargaining. This approach still exerts a powerful influence upon the unions. It results from a complex set of historical circumstances – the slow, evolutionary development of the trade union movement, the ability of unions to win for themselves rights which in other countries were to depend upon the courts or the political wing of the labour movement, and, above all, the widespread distrust of the courts on the part of most trade unions. The traditional relationship between British trade unions and the State has been well summed up in Otto Kahn-Freund's graphic phrase as being one of "collectivist laissez-faire".

The foundations of this relationship were bound to be undermined when the State came to intervene extensively in economic life. There is a sense in which many of the basic policy conflicts between government and the unions were already implicit in the White Paper on Employment Policy of 1944. For if governments were to combine full employment with price stability, there would have to be restrictions – whether voluntary or statutory – upon the wage bargaining process. From 1962 to 1979 governments, both Conservative and Labour, sought, with little success, to implement policies which would have the consequence of containing wage settlements. The defeat of Edward Heath in 1974, however, convinced many Conservatives that whether or not an incomes policy were practicable, it could not be implemented by a Conservative Government; while the events of 1978-9 showed that even a Labour Government, committed to extensive concessions to the trade union point of view, would not find it easy either.

The interventionist State has, paradoxically,

posed more problems for Labour than for the Conservatives; for it has threatened the line of demarcation between the political and the industrial wings of the Labour movement. "The questions of wages and conditions of employment", declared Arthur Deakin, General Secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union, in 1947, "are questions for the trade unions, and as soon as some of our people on the political side appreciate that and leave the job to the unions, the better for production." In 1959, Hugh Gaitskill told the Labour Party Conference of various trade union abuses which were costing the Labour Party votes, but declared that "we can safely leave it to the unions to take the necessary action". Yet, if socialism involves planning private resources for the public good, it can be seen that the assumptions of trade unionism are a hindrance, not a help, to achieving a socialist society in Britain. For the economic and social problems of the modern world are not to be settled by a line of demarcation between the representatives of political and industrial labour, but by working out a proper balance of mutual rights and obligations so as to resolve what the late Sir Andrew Shonfield called "a long-term problem of accommodation between the kind of concentrated power which is possessed by trade unions to the changing future needs of an advanced industrial society".

The commitment of British governments – until 1979 at least – to a high and stable level of employment was itself bound to involve the trade union movement inextricably with politics. If governments could no longer rely upon unemployment or the threat of unemployment as a method of controlling wages, they would have to find other means of ensuring that full employment did not lead to chronic inflation. Moreover, the increasing role of the State as employer – around one-third of all UK employees, including a majority of trade unionists, work in central or local government, in the nationalized industries, or in other public ser-

vices – blurs the line between an "industrial" demand for higher wages, and a "political" demand for a change in government policy.

Indeed, even in the inter-war years, the involvement of government in industrial affairs was turning industrial disputes into political ones. In a debate in the Commons on May 3, 1926, shortly after the beginning of the General Strike, Winston Churchill declared that he saw no difference "between a general strike to force Parliament to pass one Bill which the country does not wish for, and a general strike to force Parliament to pay a subsidy". Since 1945, it has seemed to public-sector union leaders that their success in obtaining improvements for their members was dependent not upon the financial viability of the enterprise, but upon the political will of the government of the day. So it is that industrial disputes become conflicts between the State and a particular sectional group.

This has two fundamental consequences. The first is that no government, not even one which preaches the virtues of the market, can avoid having a policy for incomes. The Conservatives, despite promising before 1979 that they would control public pay through the weapon of cash limits, soon found that they had to introduce public pay targets, and intervene at least as sharply in public pay disputes as their predecessors had done. In the private sector, by contrast, there has been no pay policy but instead steeply rising unemployment, a wasteful and inhumane method of controlling wages, but also inefficient in that it has failed to prevent private-sector earnings from forging ahead of prices.

The second consequence of the increasingly close interconnection between industrial and political matters is that decisions concerning wage relationships come to be decided, not solely by the market strength of particular unions, but by a complex process of political decision-making. Trade unions, after all, are struggling with each other as much as they are with the State, in order to secure relative benefits for

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members of their own union as opposed to members of other unions. They seek to resolve what the sociologist John Goldthorpe has called "distributional dissent" in their own favour. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the years of intense union activity against the involvement of governments in industrial relations—the years between 1962 and 1979—have led, not to greater industrial solidarity among the organized working class, but, on the contrary, to sectionalism and an accentuation of fissiparous tendencies in the labour movement. If anyone has benefited from the industrial militancy of the past two decades, it does not seem to have been the British working class. How, then, can the energies of Britain's trade unions be channelled into more constructive concerns?

Peter Hain does not confront this problem. Instead, he ignores it. He demands from the trade union movement on "absolute commitment" to independent trade union bargaining, wage struggles and militancy where appropriate" (his emphasis) to be supplemented with a wider political strategy whose outlines he leaves ambiguous, although he cites as an example the industrial action by the National Union of Teachers in 1985-6, which he sees as a means of drawing attention to the "government squeeze on resources that was hitting children, students and parents collectively". There is not a hint in *Political Strikes* of the strategy which such a radicalized trade union movement ought to adopt towards, for example, a future Labour government determined to expand public expenditure so as to lower unemployment. For such a policy can only succeed, as Roy Hattersley has recently indicated, if some contractual agreement can be reached with the unions so as to ensure that expansion is not dissipated in inflation.

One central reason for Hain's tunnel vision is that he retains quite unrealistic expectations of the radicalism of the organized working class. He argues, perfectly reasonably, for an extension of democracy and accountability in the union movement. As he notices, "some of the more perceptive and progressive trade union leaders" have appreciated that "the left has

relied far too long on 'paper armies' behind the small core of activists which effectively are the unions, and that new ways must be found to involve the whole membership, and to extend democracy and accountability". Yet, "This is quite different from the reform programme based on balloting and introduced by the Thatcherites in the 1984 Trade Union Act in order to encourage a passive, individualised concept of trade unionism which would undercut unions' only source of strength: their capacity for collective action and solidarity." It is by no means clear, however, that wider participation by trade union members would produce a radicalization of the trade union movement. The opposite seems just as likely. Survey evidence suggests, for example, that the restrictions on secondary picketing embodied in the 1980 Employment Act were overwhelmingly popular, not only with the general public, but with trade unionists themselves; while the fact that only 39 per cent of trade unionists voted Labour in 1983 indicates that a more democratic trade union movement might be even more conservative and defensive than the TUC actually is today.

Hain quotes, but does not notice the implications of, Eric Hobsbawm's comment that "it often happens . . . that the strength of the group lies not in the amount of loss they can cause to the employer, but in the inconvenience they can cause to the public; that is, to other workers . . .". He hardly mentions the Winter of Discontent of 1978-9, and, in his discussion of the miners' strike of 1984-5, he fails to analyse the widespread intimidation of working miners, contenting himself with declaring that the National Union of Mineworkers should have publicly urged their members "not to be provoked by the police".

The issue is of importance for more than the merely prosocial reason that the lack of solidarity among the NUM members was one of the central reasons for the failure of the strike. For the methods by which the miners' strike was conducted confirmed the lessons of the Winter of Discontent, that the voluntaristic basis of the British trade union movement, as embedded in the settlement of 1906, was no longer tenable. This settlement, as Sir Henry Phelps Brown has pointed out in *The Origins of Trade Union Power* (reviewed in the TLS, January 20, 1984), could be defended not so much in terms of abstract justice as because it assumed certain attitudes on the part of the trade union movement. To place the unions outside the law in respect of civil proceedings was tolerable "only so long as they remained voluntarily within a certain boundary of strike action". So it was that public-sector trade unionists effectively made a better case for the legislative changes which Mrs Thatcher was proposing in 1979 than the Conservatives could do themselves.

Hain gives equally scant treatment to what is undoubtedly the most successful political strike in Britain this century, the only one indeed to have succeeded in compelling a major change of policy on the part of an elected government. In 1974, the Ulster Workers' Council, composed of Northern Ireland Unionists opposed to the power-sharing Executive in the province supported by the Labour, Liberal and Conservative Parties, called a strike designed to make government unworkable. Their success was complete. The Executive collapsed, and, since 1974, Northern Ireland has been ruled directly from Westminster. Thus the Ulster Workers' Council strike in 1974 succeeded, not only in destroying the power-sharing Executive established by Edward Heath, but also in vetoing, for over a decade, any constitutional progress at all in Northern Ireland. For, until the Hillsborough Agreement of 1985, it seemed that the Unionist majority in Northern Ireland had the power to prevent any recognition of the aspirations of the minority in that part of the United Kingdom. It is too early to say whether Mrs Thatcher has been able to call the Unionists' bluff; but it is in Northern Ireland, rather than on the mainland of Britain, that industrial militancy is most likely to compel a government to change course. In February 1974, Heath called an election to seek an answer to the question, "Who governs?" Yet it was not the miners who succeeded in making part of the country ungovernable to that year, but the Ulster Workers' Council, who were able to

dictate the limits within which the writ of the British government could run in Northern Ireland.

The UWC strike achieved its objectives because of a deep-seated and widespread sense of injustice (whether well-founded or not) on the part of the Unionist working class in Northern Ireland, directed at the iniquities of the Sunningdale agreement, and especially at the proposal for a Council of Ireland. A book on the relationship between the State and trade unionism in Britain ought to have carefully considered the reasons why such a mood has so rarely been felt by trade unionists outside Northern Ireland.

Hain concludes *Political Strikes* by posing what he sees as the essential choice facing British trade unions. "The choice before the labour movement", he declares

could be stark. Either there will be greater "Americanization" of British trade unions through "strike" deals and aggressive management techniques which by-pass local officials. Or Britain's unions can try to overcome their historic limitations by constructively politicizing their activities, broadening their sectional interests into community-wide ones, mobilizing public support, revitalizing and democratizing their structures to involve their members more effectively, and, most important, campaigning for industrial democracy as a step towards real workers' control.

In reality, however, the choice is not at all like this. There is a third, more optimistic possibility which he does not mention. It is that British industrial relations will gradually come to be transformed into a co-operative system within which trade unions, in return for a major share in the formulation of economic policy, agree to shape their demands in accordance with the progress of the national economy. Hain treats Britain as a typical capitalist society, varying in no significant respect from other societies in which the means of production remain predominantly in private hands. *Political Strikes*, like the standard Marxist accounts of industrial relations, fails to notice the diversity of relationships between trade unions and the State in different capitalist societies. Yet the experience of countries such as Austria, Norway and Sweden, and, to some extent, the Federal Republic of Germany, shows unequivocally that the co-operative model can provide gains for both sides of industry greater than any that can be achieved through labour militancy and free collective bargaining.

Countries which adhere to the co-operative model have seen full employment more successfully protected than countries such as Britain, dominated by the adversary model; and they have been able to cushion themselves against the oil-price shock. In such societies, strikes come to be seen as the product of an earlier, less sophisticated era of labour relations in which the working class were excluded from the decision-making process. Once accepted as genuine social partners, organized labour may find that the strike weapon recedes into the background as a means of improving working-class living standards. Countries in which the co-operative model prevails approximate much more to the ideals of socialism than societies with more militant labour movements and an adversary mode of industrial relations; and in these model social democracies, we find the withering away not of the State, but of debilitating industrial conflict.

Peter Hain's aim, by contrast, is to reinforce the adversary system of industrial relations, combat the "new realism" of the trade union movement, which he sees as tantamount to a "new defeatism", and replace it by a new militancy. He is unlikely to have any more success in this exercise than his predecessors of the 1920s. Their overestimation of the power of union militancy led them headlong into the General Strike, the failure of which, according to Beatrice Webb, showed

what a *some* people the British are . . . The British are hopelessly good-natured and full of common sense, to which the British workman adds pigheadedness, jealousy and stupidity . . . We are all of us just good-natured stupid folk. The worst of it is that the governing class are as good-natured and stupid as the labour movement!

The British trade union movement deserves a better epithet.

Workers' Self-Management in the United States by Christopher Eaton Guinn has recently appeared in paperback (251pp, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, \$9.85, 0 8014 9376 3).

French lessons

D. S. Bell

JACK HAYWARD

The State and the Market Economy: Industrial patriotism and economic intervention in France
267pp. Brighton: Wheatsheaf. £28.50.
07450 0012 6

In both Britain and France the State has ceased to be fashionable: politicians now debate how best to dismantle it — "privatization" is the word used on both sides of the Channel. Jack Hayward's book, however, has an older and more enduring academic concern: with the scope and limits of State action in a modern economy as well as with what intervention can achieve and what can be learnt from France; those looking for a fearless polemic will be disappointed.

Professor Hayward begins by surveying the various views on the relation of the State to the market and develops the notion of "limited pluralism", whereby most of those people who are essential to a "liberal" social and economic policy are excluded from the community which makes it. He then examines those people who do make policy, the restricted group of bureaucrats and business leaders interlinked, in the distinctive French way, so that a consensus builds up despite political disagreements. This self-recruiting and self-perpetuating oligarchy did not prevent first Chénedeville and then Fabius (as industry ministers under the Socialists) from trying out contrasting policies — nor are bureaucrats completely unaffected by the market, as the history of the Socialists' nationalizations seems to show. Later on, Hayward returns to this theme of a central policy elite in a discussion of the Socialist government's moves towards decentralization, whose full effects (especially on economic policy) have yet to be seen. He shows how the central authority can be circumvented and the existence of local power bastions defended by *notables*. He also looks at the management of current social and economic problems, at the relations between trade unions and pressure groups and the State, at local responses to the economic crisis, as well as at the record of the Mitterrand years.

Until recently, the notion that the State had a right and a duty to intervene in the economy was a commonplace of French politics, which is one reason for studying French economic policy. But "intervention" must not be confused with the "Plan" — the "poetic" element in the French economy as Michel Rocard once called it. The Plan, like many other French institutions, benefited by being associated with the boom years, though its own role in that expansion was never satisfactorily demonstrated. Central government in France has always been as reluctant as our own to turn over political decisions to the planners (it will be interesting, in this respect, to see whether monetary policy will now be devolved to the Bank of France by Jacques Chirac).

Before the 1981 elections, socialist rhetoric managed to create the impression that France was about to enter a golden age, but in 1981-2 a reflationary experiment ran into balance-of-payments problems and had to be abandoned. If nothing else, this first effort probably brought home to public opinion — in a way which previous French governments had not — that industrial restructuring (and hence lay-offs of labour) were inevitable. The Socialists hesitated briefly over a possible "Albanian" solution (import controls, leaving the European Monetary System, etc.) before finally abandoning reflation. But Hayward points out that the Socialist interlude was by no means the disaster it is sometimes said to have been: France has had positive growth during the past thirteen years, inflation has fallen since 1981 (when the Socialists left government it was lower than in Britain) and monetary targets (for what they are worth) have been more effectively met in France than in Britain.

Professor Hayward makes few concessions to the general reader (a good deal of background knowledge is needed always to follow the argument) but for students of contemporary France or of relations between industry and the State this book is required reading.

New trends in organized crime

Eric J. Hobsbawm

PINO ARLACCHI

Mafia Business: The mafia ethic and the spirit of capitalism
239pp. Verso. £12.95.
086091 135 7

"What is robbing a bank compared to founding one?" asked Brecht's Macbeth in the *Threepenny Opera*. The main conclusion of Pino Arlacchi's *Mafia Business* (*The Entrepreneurial Mafia* is a better and more literal translation of the Italian title) is that the question is misconceived. There is no difference. In the course of the 1970s not only did the Italian mafias become, for the first time in history, really big business, as did analogous forms of criminal enterprise elsewhere in the world, but delinquent capital accumulation was, probably for the first time, sufficiently vast to interest the important legitimate money operators.

Ours is the first era when crooked bankers not only preside over the collapse of financial empires, but are also found hanging under London bridges in mysterious circumstances, or are murdered, by means of cynicide, administered nobody knows how, in high-security jails where they are serving a sentence for ordering the murder of other bankers. As Arlacchi points out, the *chef-d'oeuvre* of the late financier Michele Sindona, who thus swallowed one espresso too many, "consisted precisely in the opening up of a channel of communication between the legal financial circuit and the circuit of illegally accumulated capital. Before the 1970s, no organic links existed between the two."

Arlacchi's book is essentially about recent changes in the nature of organized criminality, mostly, but not exclusively, in Italy — though

the operations of the syndicates he describes are "multinational". The author writes as an expert both on the old mafia, on whose Calabrian version he has written the standard work *Mafia, Peasants and Great Estates: Society in traditional Calabria*, (1983); on the new big-business mafia; and on the new mafias big business, which he has been monitoring through his association with the Italian government's Anti-Mafia Commission and his friendship with the chief Sicilian prosecutors of the mafia, dead or alive. The British edition of the book extends his study beyond its original scope by a highly suggestive survey of "current world trends in organized crime".

In his view two factors have transformed the criminal economy, at least in Italy. First, an "entrepreneurial mafia" has emerged, as distinct from the traditional mafia networks which, with all their ruthlessness and greed, were hampered as potential capitalists "by the cult of honour which obliged them to squander their time and resources in gaining supremacy over their rivals". Thieves, it seems, can afford honour, but big business men cannot. In the second place, the enormous growth of the drug traffic since the mid-1970s, which Arlacchi incidentally documents, and perhaps urban property development since the 1960s — that black decade in the history of the world's cities — which he may underestimate, have produced an extraordinary boom in criminal superprofits.

For the first time in Italy, and perhaps elsewhere, the capital accumulated by criminals has reached the scale of genuinely big business — as in the estimated profits of \$600 million a year of the Palermo heroin wholesaling syndicate during the years 1977-82. Until the 1970s crime paid only moderately well by the standards of Wall Street or *Forbes* magazine. The \$15 million net worth of one of the five great

New York-based mafia "families" in 1972 would not put it high among the list of rich New Yorkers, let alone New York-based corporations. Someone will do business with murderers if they have enough money, especially if they have not been selected for their capacity to understand the Eurodollar market or offshore tax-havens. (It is, of course, as the author reminds us, murder that establishes men as serious *investors*.) Small wonder that the distinction between what used to be called the "acceptable" and "unacceptable" faces of capitalism becomes hazy. The book does not enquire whether it was already being eroded in the 1970s independently of mafia money.

In fact, the interpenetration of straight money, bent money and money of vague and changing shape is today such that Arlacchi's chapter entitled "Strategies for Combatting Organized Crime" dismisses police, law-courts and prisons as irrelevant, and concentrate entirely on striking "at its real structures and seats of power — at markets, bankers and accumulated capital". And much the most novel parts of his book deal with the intertwining of dirty and clean money, and the specific advantages and disadvantages of enterprise conducted by criminals. Those who fear for the future of the Western family will be comforted by the discovery (documented statistically here) that the best guarantee of success in the mafia is a minimum of three able-bodied brothers in the firm; five are even better.

The narcotics industry lends itself particularly well to the analysis of criminal enterprise, since (unlike some other branches of such enterprise), it is exclusively illegal, and can therefore be conducted profitably only by people who know how to operate entirely outside legality. An experience in legitimate corporations, even very large ones, may actually be a disqualification for those who wish to enter a

business where the risks of loss are small and probably predictable, and the potential profit vast. The Sicilian mafia, it appears, which was previously insignificant in the heroin trade beside the Corsicans' "French Connection", succeeded because it raised the initial capital for going into narcotics manufacture in a big way largely from the vast liquid funds washing around Sicily as unspent "support funds", which had been allocated to regional government from Rome (who would spend them on anything so unprofitable as public works?), and the as yet unremitted or retained tax revenue funds collected by the private tax-collecting contractors. But of course, once the profits rolled in, the problem for the mafia was not how to raise more money but what to do with its own enormous liquid funds. It is at this stage that bank-robbers become valued clients, and themselves bankers. And, as in Palermo, where (as in other countries which concentrate on service industries and finance) industry decays as the bank deposits soar, very few people do not have a potential material interest in a mafia-based economy. It remains to be seen whether the adversities of the mafia are strong enough to overcome the strength of this influence, though it may be weakened if the heroin market ceases to be so buoyant. The real expansion lately has, after all, been in cocaine, in which the mafia is not, or not yet, a major factor.

This book should be widely read. It is indeed only an interim report, but the best available one, on a significant global phenomenon. Readers who know nothing about the traditional mafias out of which the new and murderous entrepreneurs have emerged, will find an excellent survey here of the state of research; but readers who already know their Blok, Schnelders, Hess and earlier Arlacchi will find little to surprise them.

Chasing the conspirators

Hugh Brogan

HENRY HURT

Reasonable Doubt: An investigation into the assassination of John F. Kennedy
553pp. Sldgwick and Jackson. £15.
0283 99361 8

No one is more tiresome than a man with an obsession that we do not share. Henry Hurt is one of many sad souls who are unable to let go the mystery of John F. Kennedy's death in 1963. Not being one such myself I inevitably found his book very tedious. So those who think they would enjoy picking over once more the familiar evidence and asking the same old questions should not be put off by anything said in this review.

This is not to endorse the official version of President Kennedy's murder. It is by now almost impossible for anyone with the slightest acquaintance with the facts to accept the Warren Commission's flogging that Lee Harvey Oswald, acting alone, killed Kennedy and wounded Governor John Connolly with three shots from a Mannlicher-Carcano rifle.

According to United States Marina records, Oswald was a distinctly poor marksman; no one has yet been able to duplicate his alleged feat of firing three accurate shots from the rifle in five seconds; and the best evidence shows that there were four shots, not three. Oswald's subsequent murder by Jack Ruby also trails so many curious details as to make the official version of events incredible (the Warren Report, for instance, omitted the evidence that Ruby was a minor hoodlum). In sum, there was almost certainly a conspiracy to assassinate Kennedy, but thanks to official bungling and obfuscation little or nothing has ever been established about it, and it seems quite likely that nothing ever will be.

There really is not much more to be said, and the news is scarcely fresh, Edward Jay Epstein exposed the inadequacies of the Warren Commission twenty years ago in his *Inquest*. His account has been so entirely accepted that eight years ago, in a life of Robert Kennedy, Arthur Schlesinger Jr could refer casually, almost in passing, to the "bureaucratic imperative" to cover up, as if everyone knew, what it

was (and indeed, after the Watergate affair, everyone did). The Secret Service, the FBI, the CIA, and the Dallas police department having failed their country quite miserably, it is not surprising that they did all they could to conceal the degree of their incompetence from the public, even to the point of sabotaging the Warren investigation (though at least J. Edgar Hoover disciplined seventeen of his agents for their blunders). But the cover-up now being part of the public record, why go into it all over again?

Mr Hurt states several times that the course of history was changed by the assassination. By this he means something more than the safe evidence, indeed the tautological (all history is change); yet is he right? Lyndon Johnson, as President, devoutly carried on Kennedy's programmes: "let us continue" was his motto, echoing Kennedy's "let us begin". He did so triumphantly in domestic policy: probably Kennedy could not have done so well. He failed completely in Indo-China: Kennedy could hardly have done worse, but it needs an act of faith to believe that he would have extricated the United States from that quagmire sooner, or more skilfully, than his unlucky inheritor. It is extremely difficult to say exactly what difference the murder made; yet it is essential for Hurt to assert the opposite, and for that matter to exaggerate Kennedy's importance ("the most popular president in American history") in order to justify his own obsession. How much wiser the attitude of the American Joursalier, Anthony Lewis:

The search for conspiracy only increases the elements of morbidity and paranoia and fantasy in this country . . . It obscures our necessary understanding . . . that in this life there is often tragedy without reason.

Hurt does not have the best historians' or journalists' gift for catching the essence of a time or place. No one who was alive and past infancy in America on November 22, 1963, will ever forget the disorienting shock of the dreadful news. It is an experience which, more than any other, cuts us off from the younger generations. That afternoon Dallas was a bedlam. Frightened people saw assassins everywhere; police switchboards were jammed by incoming calls, many reporting sightings of the murderer, many threatening Oswald's life after his

arrest. Fear, grief and shame bewildered everyone; inevitably, routine broke down. Yet Hurt repeatedly rebukes the police and the doctors for muffling their responsibility; he does not even spare the Kennedy family. Certainly, if it had been an ordinary homicide, the innumerable blunders would have been unforgivable (Hurt's account of the autopsy is particularly distressing); but as it was a presidential assassination it is hardly surprising that so many people lost their heads. This at least is something which the FBI understood better than Hurt. Bearing in mind the chaos in Dallas, and the quite extraordinary rout of liars and lunatics and honest blunders and eager exhibitionists that justified for attention, it is easy enough to see why the Bureau dismissed so much eyewitness testimony as worthless. Witnesses today cannot even agree as to whether the President's body was carried from Dallas to Washington in a body-bag or wrapped in sheets, or what sort of a coffin was used. Hurt, naturally, finds these discrepancies sinisterly suggestive.

Some valuable testimony, nevertheless, was probably lost. Thus it seems clear that Ruby might have talked to some purpose if he had been more sensitively handled. In any case, the outcome has not justified the manner in which J. Edgar Hoover fastened on the theory of a lone assassin and by skilful manipulation of the evidence and the Warren Commission forced it on the country. Self-serving motives apart, he believed that a quick and plausible finding would do more to reassure and stabilize the republic than a painstaking exploration of messy and unpalatable truth. It was a characteristic bureaucratic mistake, laid bare as such by this scab-picking. But even if the details of the conspiracy had been discovered and published, how much would they have mattered? Robert Kennedy seems to have thought the inquiry trivial. The event, his brother's death, dwarfed its causes, whatever they were.

Naturally Hurt's view is different. At times he writes as if the conspirators must have been figures of gigantic power and resourcefulness, who killed Kennedy in order to take over America, if not the world. They are more likely to have been a sordid bunch of oddballs like the gang which killed Lincoln. The Warren Commission at least made it dreadfully clear how

many such oddballs there were in American life, and the events of the next few years showed how lethal they remained. Dallas, indeed, was merely their first blow. The Kennedy conspirators seem in retrospect to have been forerunners of the terrorists who have made life so unpleasant for so many in recent times. If they were Cubans (whether pro or anti-Castro) they may certainly be categorized as terrorists. If they were not, then in this respect Robert Kennedy's death five years later at the hands of a Palestinian is perhaps more significant than his brother's. The discovery of the conspirators would tell us something about the state of our civilization, but probably not much about power and politics in America. Only a stubborn feeling that justice should be served makes the continuing hunt for the murderer seem worth while; and there is reason to believe that even as things stand justice has not been mocked entirely. Oswald was certainly a participant in the plot: he is dead. Ruby died of cancer while a prisoner. Ooe Robert Easterling, whose confession may have some truth in it, is rotting away in a madhouse. And a good many other suspects died prematurely, some by murder, some by suicide. If, as seems likely, Kennedy was a victim of that sinister world where organized crime and Cuban plotters meet, then it is some comfort to believe that his murderers followed up their atrocious coup by killing each other.

But this is speculation, and after following Hurt in his examination of a hundred mutually contradictory theories, all of which he seems tempted to believe, I have become very wary of speculation. It seems more than time to leave the dead man in peace in his grave at Arlington, or at most to visit him there, like the 3½ million pilgrims who, according to Mr Hurt, pay their respects each year.

The Airman and the Carpenter: The Lindbergh case and the framing of Richard Hauptmann, Ludovic Kennedy's critical examination of the trial and execution of the German immigrant carpenter believed to have kidnapped Charles Lindbergh's baby son in 1932, which was first published in 1985, has recently appeared in paperback. (438pp. Fontana. £3.95. 0 00 636778 X). It was reviewed in the TLS of May 22, 1985.

◆ NEW FOUCAULT READINGS ◆

Why did sexual experience in the West become a moral question?

MICHEL FOUCAULT
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MICHEL FOUCAULT
THE FOUCAULT READER
Edited by PAUL RABINOW
0670 20081 6
£14.50 (hardback)

WILEY

The largest lunacies of politics

Alan Ryan

LEO KUPER
The Prevention of Genocide
286pp. Yale University Press. £19.95.
0300034180

Almost all of us suffer from some sort of nightmare in the face of the twentieth century's record of political mass murder. Parents shudder at the thought of the hundreds of thousands of children gassed or shot by the Nazis and feel a moment of terror at what life might inflict on their own offspring. Many of us wonder in a queasy sort of way whether we would have been capable of resisting the murderers – or whether we would have been carried away by fear and excitement, whether we would have accepted what Hannah Arendt christened "the banality of evil" and simply have done our everyday jobs even though they were part of a programme of massacre. As Leo Kuper insists, it is not enough to dismiss the Nazi extermination camps as the work of psychopaths. Too many perfectly ordinary people helped to run them. One cannot censure genocide with one particular form of political madness. There are too many places in which ordinary politics involves mass murder, or the threat of mass murder. And the threatened annihilation of multitudes of civilians by nuclear weapons is so much the stuff of everyday international relations that it takes some imagination to rank it alongside genocide, as Kuper does.

The Prevention of Genocide is not primarily concerned to explain genocide – it isn't an explanation of the banality of evil, nor yet an investigation of chthonic politics such as Norman Cohn's *Pursuit of the Millennium*, though Kuper touches on the contending explanations of our proneness to massacre one another. It focuses mainly on the failure of the United Nations to intervene successfully when political massacres are in progress. Many of Kuper's readers will, I suspect, believe before they begin that the United Nations is chronically incapable of swift, direct and effective peace-keeping action, whether to prevent genocide or anything else. If they believe anything else, Kuper will certainly disillusion them.

Yet he is neither cynical nor despairing: he has a long record of battling against the odds. He was a lawyer in pre-war South Africa and specialized in defending the basic rights of the Black population. After the war he was a leading figure in the Liberal Party, one of the last faint hopes for successful multi-racial politics in the benighted republic. Over the past quarter of a century he has been embroiled in the United Nations' efforts in the field of human rights. Like other distinguished South African lawyers he has a belief in the power of the law which is simultaneously surprising and heartening. The scepticism with which many British students of the field regard the whole idea of human rights is entirely alien to him. The field is one where, in principle at least, individuals might eventually be able to appeal against local injustice to an international law which would provide a real safeguard for the rights which everyone acknowledges as fundamental.

Among these, as Kuper says, the right to life must take priority. No other rights are worth having unless we can be guaranteed our own existence. Yet the United Nations has been painfully feeble in protecting it. The explanation is multi-layered. Partly, it lies in the familiar fact of great power rivalry, which leads Russia and the United States to employ their veto in the Security Council with complete cynicism. As in his book *Genocide* (1981), Kuper takes the civil war which led to the creation of Bangladesh as a prime example of how the efforts of the United Nations were frustrated by great power cynicism. Definition of the term "genocide" is a contentious matter which has itself done a good deal to impede effective action by the United Nations. But there is no doubt that the government of Yahya Khan tried to put down Bengali aspirations for autonomy (not secession) by "exemplary massacre". Humanitarian efforts to secure a quick peace were hampered by the Soviet Union. The most obvious motive for the Soviet action was to give India, India, more time to make military incursions into West Pakistan. It is really impossible, says Kuper, for outside nations to

intervene in concert in the interests of averting genocide?

But the great powers by no means lead the field in cynicism and brutality. The United Nations suffers from an internal incoherence – though Kuper does not say so, the United Nations is in fact built on this internal incoherence – in that it emphasizes at one and the same time a principle of national self-determination which encourages sovereign states to regard their own conduct and misconduct as a matter for themselves alone, and an idealistic, "natural law" picture of the scope of international law which suggests that not even the sovereign state is above the law. Sometimes this incoherence

is coped with by requiring that states must explicitly accede to conventions allowing their subjects to sue them in supranational courts before subjects may actually do so. At other times, the UN's inability to intervene unilaterally and command a sovereign state to desist from oppressing a national minority is covered up by raising the question whether the civil strife in question constitutes a threat to international peace. There was no way in which the United Nations could have enjoined the government of Nigeria to treat the Ibo population better simply on the grounds of their right to decent treatment. Had the Biafran conflict spread, so that it was undeniably a



Funeral of two ANC soldiers killed in clashes with the police in 1984, from South Africa, the Cordoned Heart: Twenty South African photographers, edited by Omar Badsha (180pp. Gallery Press/Norton. £14.55. 0620 091253).

A dig at some doctrines

David Miller

GORDON GRAHAM
Politics in Its Place: A study of six ideologies
196pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press. £17.50
(paperback, £7.95).
0198247858

This is a very sceptical book. It is about, on the one hand, the nature of political argument and, on the other, the six ideologies of the title: liberalism, democratic socialism, nationalism, fascism, anarchism and conservatism. Gordon Graham writes as a philosopher and his intellectual strategy is almost wholly negative in character. He undermines doctrines by showing that their supporting arguments are less than conclusive, leaving other doctrines holding the field by default. This is how the first five ideologies are disposed of, and for a while it looks as though conservatism ("true conservatism", of an Oakshottian kind) is going to be left in possession. But in the closing pages – in a final gesture of scepticism – he deals that, too, a nasty chop.

One could disagree with very little of what Graham says, and still find his method of proceeding unsatisfactory. Ideologies may be held together less by formal relations of entailment among their constituent doctrines than by their capacity to offer a coherent picture of how the world goes, and how to act in it, to particular groups of people at particular times. To say this is not to conflate the critical assessment of doctrines with a sociological account of their origins, a conflation which Graham rightly rejects in his second chapter. The point is rather that ideologies may be too amorphous for the philosophical method to get a grip. It may not be appropriate to single out a central thesis for critical examination, and to suppose that an

entire political outlook can thereby be destroyed.

Graham implicitly concedes as much in his fourth chapter, where he argues against the view that ideological frameworks are incommensurable (and therefore immune to comparative criticism); in particular, against the claim that this follows from the relativity of their underlying values. In keeping with the sceptical style of the book, he avoids rebutting this challenge directly, through showing that objective reasoning on value-questions is possible. He maintains instead that "the proper attitude to ideological disputes is an a posteriori and a piecemeal one, in which no general limits are to be laid down with regard to who and where critical thought may usefully be employed". But the examples offered to support this involve drawing out of an ideology some empirical claim (for example, a prediction about the likely results of a favoured policy) which can be tested against the facts. This, however, immediately carries us off the territory of the philosopher on to that of the social scientist. It suggests that the most fruitful way to assess ideologies will be to compare their empirical content with the findings of social scientific research.

This is not at all Graham's procedure in the second part of the book. In so far as there is empiricism in the *Ideologies* which ensues, it is of the most casual sort. The dominant mode of argument is philosophical and it runs headlong into the problem of value-relativity that was sidestepped in Part One. Several examples might be offered to illustrate this point.

One occurs in Graham's critique of democratic socialism. He argues that a commitment to social justice, taken to be the defining feature of this ideology, conflicts with individual liberty, in particular the liberty to dispose of one's property as one wishes. He further argues that enforced social justice cannot be an

ultimate value, since any desired pattern of distribution may be conceived of as arising through a series of voluntary transactions (exchanges and gifts) – a possibility which even the socialist must prefer. Now notice two features of this train of reasoning. First, it has an entirely formal character. No evidence is produced to show that the preferred possibility is empirically realistic. Graham writes, "If it should be argued that this other society is beyond our wildest dreams we may reply that there is no reason a priori to think it any less possible or likely than the socially just one". Well, no reason a priori, certainly, but the socialist will undoubtedly rest his case on a body of evidence indicating that empirically it is indeed highly improbable. Second, the argument relies upon the moral relevance of a particular conception of individual liberty. The socialist might deny this outright, or more probably point to other kinds of freedom inherent in the régime of social justice, which, in his view, outweigh restrictions on the free disposal of property.

In short, where Graham ought to be engaged in empirical debate as a means of resolving ideological disputes, he retreats to a priorism; but in the course of doing so he runs straight into those basic value-conflicts that the pragmatic programme of his fourth chapter sought to avoid. For this reason the book cannot really be judged a success. Its treatment of ideologies is too narrow to serve as an introduction; and as a critical discussion it does not cut very deep. It is nevertheless not without merit. It is clearly and attractively written, and fair-minded in dealing with opponents. It also offers the reader some incidental pleasures, not least the chapter on "Fascism and the New Right" in which passages from Mussolini and Roger Scruton are juxtaposed to good effect. The trouble all stems from its underlying assumption that philosophical analysis alone can make a decisive contribution in this area.

Understanding on the move

James Joll

MARTIN JAY
Permanent Exiles: Essays on the intellectual
migration from Germany to America
328pp. Columbia University Press. \$30.
0231 060726

The group of philosophers and sociologists belonging to the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research which moved to New York in 1934 were exiles of a rather different kind from the majority of the German scholars driven out by the Nazis. "They were", Martin Jay writes, "never forced to earn their living from their writings or teachings as were less fortunate refugees. In addition, they were keenly aware of the need to preserve the peculiarly German cultural tradition which Germany's current rulers were doing so much to destroy. And finally, they considered their native language far more appropriate for the expression of dialectical thinking than English..." In his earlier book *The Dialectical Imagination*, published in 1973, Professor Jay gave an admirable account of the history and fate of the Institute itself as well as analysing its characteristic beliefs and methods.

The essays collected in *Permanent Exiles* (which appeared in various periodicals between 1970 and 1983) deal with aspects of the thought of individual members of the Institute – Herbert Marcuse, Theodor W. Adorno, Leo Lowenthal, Max Horkheimer – and the reception of their ideas in America. Jay also includes a group of studies of thinkers who, while not members of the Institute, shared a common background in German idealist philosophy and especially in the thought of Hegel: Hannah Arendt, Siegfried Kracauer, the "incisive, sharp-tongued, combative" Henry Pachter, and George Lichtheim, who, especially through his contributions to the *TLS*, did much to make known the work of the Frankfurt School to a not always very receptive audience in Britain.

Not all these were "permanent exiles" in the strict sense: the Institute itself returned to Frankfurt in 1950 and both Horkheimer and Adorno held senior posts in the University there. Yet Jay is right in thinking that the philosophical position – the so-called "critical theory" – developed by the Frankfurt School meant that by definition they were unable to find a permanent intellectual home. The "dialectical imagination" which informed their teaching meant that there could never be a moment of repose: each conclusion must be challenged in turn and subjected to a new twist of the dialectic. One of the themes running through these essays is therefore the constant tension between the search for some ultimate intellectual and social harmony, "a utopia of identity in which all contradictions are overcome", to quote Jay's summary of one aspect of Marcuse's thought, and on the other hand the "negative dialectic" of Adorno, who maintained, "Whoever chooses philosophy as a profession today must first reject the illusions that earlier philosophical enterprises began with: that the power of thought is sufficient to grasp the totality of the real."

There is another sense, too, in which, for all their links with the thought of the past, with Marx, Nietzsche, Hegel, Freud or Heidegger, the members of the Frankfurt School were permanent exiles. Their belief in the role of the élite, as in Horkheimer's assertion that "under the conditions of later capitalism and the impact on the workers' life of the authoritarian state's apparatus of oppression, truth has sought refuge among small groups of admirable men", was reinforced by their critique of popular culture and the way in which the masses were manipulated by the organs of capitalist society. Some of them, such as Marcuse, were temperamentally more optimistic than others, like Walter Benjamin, who saw progress as a storm propelling us blindly onwards and leaving a growing pile of debris behind. And, inevitably, given the course of twentieth-century history, there was a tendency to become ever more pessimistic. "Today the fate Heine suffered", Adorno wrote, "has literally become the common fate. Homelessness has been inflicted on everyone. All, in language and being, have been 'damaged' as the exile himself was."

The question of language is a central part of the idea of exile: "Every intellectual in emigration is, without exception, mutilated..." Adorno wrote in *Minima Moralia*. "His language has been expropriated and the historical dimension that nourished his knowledge sapped." It was this belief that led Adorno himself to return to Germany after the war when some of his colleagues chose to remain in America. At the same time, at another level, this sensitive preoccupation with the niceties of language is one of the reasons why his writing is so hard to translate and indeed, it must be admitted, so hard to understand even in the original. Jay has the essential gift for an intellectual historian, the capacity to convey what is important and significant in writers who sometimes seem to be expressing themselves in language of impenetrable obscurity, and he can show why their ideas were important, even if to some readers they seem perverse, wrong-headed and self-indulgent. He is also himself interested in the problem of translation: one of his best essays is devoted to a controversy between Siegfried Kracauer and Walter Benjamin about the new German translation of the Old Testament by Martin Buber and Franz Rosenzweig, begun in 1926 and finished by Buber in 1961 when, tragically, the German Jewish readers for whom it was intended no longer existed. Jay uses this discussion as an opportunity for raising several questions about the use of language and the nature of translation (echoing some of the ideas in George Steiner's *After Babel*) which go far beyond the immediate problem of how to translate the Bible.

There are two other essays on Siegfried Kracauer, based on Kracauer's archives now in the Schiller National Museum in Marbach-am-Neckar. One is a biographical study and the other deals with his relations with Adorno. Kracauer is known to most of us simply as the author of the classic study of the German cinema *From Caligari to Hitler*, but Jay's essays show that he was an important and interesting thinker whose work covers much more than the cinema. Perhaps the best tribute I can pay to Martin Jay as an intellectual historian is that he sent me straight out to look for a copy of Kracauer's *History: The Last Things before the Last*.

The reputation of the Frankfurt School has had its ups and downs: Marcuse became one of the prophets of the student movement in the late 1960s. Adorno, on the other hand, not long before his actual death, was assaulted by a band of women students with bare breasts who covered him with flowers and declared him extinct. Walter Benjamin has remained a cult figure – in part, one can't help feeling, because the extreme difficulty of his hermetic thought and language makes it possible to read into his writing whatever the reader wants to find there. *Permanent Exiles*, in addition to tracing some of these changing attitudes to members of the Frankfurt School, gives a very interesting picture of the world of ideas within which they operated. And if one is sometimes irritated by the obscurity of their language and their remoteness from the real world (Jay's essay on "Critical Theory's Analysis of Anti-Semitism" gives a good example), they nevertheless made an attempt to provide an intelligible framework to explain what was happening, in a mood well summed up by George Lichtheim when he wrote, "The central problem now before us is not so much to change the world (that is being done independently), but to understand it."

The Occult Roots of Nazism: The Ariosophists of Austria and Germany (293pp. Wellingborough: Aquarian. £12.95. 0 85030 402 4) by Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke is an account of some myths, symbols and fantasies that influenced Nazi thinking. The author traces these fantasies through the writings and cult activities of Guido von List (1848-1919) and Jörg Lanz von Liebenfels (1874-1954), who coined the term "Ariosophy", naming the occult wisdom of the Aryans. These writers' vision of an alleged golden age, in which gnostic priest-hoods expounded occult-realist doctrines and ruled over a racially pure society, was used to berate so-called "anti-German" interests that had sought to destroy this world by emancipating non-Germans "inferiors" in the name of egalitarianism.

Not getting them young

A. J. Nicholls

GEOFFREY J. GILES
Students and National Socialism in Germany
360pp. Guildford: Princeton University Press.
£34.10.
0691 054333

In July 1931 the main German student association, the *Deutscher Studentenbund*, was taken over by the Nazis, whose leader, Baldur von Schirach, enthusiastically assured Hitler that academic youth stood behind him. Once the Third Reich was established the Nazis made large claims for their own student organization, the NSDStB, and it has often been assumed that by 1936 a majority of German university students were organized into *Kameradschaften*, or Nazi residential communities, in which they were subjected to rigorous indoctrination.

Geoffrey Giles points out in *Students and National Socialism in Germany*, that in this, as in many other aspects of the Third Reich, the theory did not always match up to the practice. The NSDStB's successes were not so great as their propaganda made out. Many students showed reluctance to be dragooned into Nazi togetherness, and the loose structure of German universities made it difficult to regiment them. The old fraternities – themselves very nationalistic and usually antisemitic – were supposed to have been "co-ordinated" by the Nazis in the autumn of 1935, but many of them stubbornly continued to exist. Nor does Nazi indoctrination seem to have proved too effective. During the war the authorities were having to repress a student partiality for jazz, "swing" and even the Lambeth Walk. There was particular dismay, in November 1940, when it was discovered that a Nazi *Kameradschaft* was dancing to British gramophone records.

Giles provides us with a lot of interesting information about the NSDStB, but his book really ought to have a subtitle since much of it is

focused on the University of Hamburg, for which the NSDStB archives survived almost intact. It is not always clear how typical the findings on Hamburg were, but the history of this University under the Third Reich is certainly rich in incident. By emphasizing the relative lack of success of the Nazi student organization, Giles sometimes seems a little mild in his judgments about the University's own surrender to Nazi pressures. Having described a university in which books were burned, students were excluded on racial and political grounds, and studies were disrupted by paramilitary exercises, it seems odd to claim that "the university, standing apart from the conflict [between rival Nazi groups] was able on the whole to hold its own..." What sort of a university had it become? Again, Giles makes a good deal of the ineffectiveness of the Nazi lecturers' association, but then tells us that 64 per cent of professors in Hamburg definitely belonged to the Nazi party and only 17 per cent definitely did not. He himself accepts that party membership was an affirmation of Hitler's policies.

Power struggles between different organizations were endemic in the Third Reich. One must be careful not to confuse them with rejection of Hitler's régime. An interesting example of this is given by Giles when describing how members of a Nazi *Kameradschaft* house rebelled after a popular leader had been dismissed for having been a communist sympathizer in 1932. The offenders were expelled, but established themselves as an SS student formation and were thus able to huy back the *Kameradschaft* house for their own use. Who were the more enthusiastic national socialists, the "SS" students or their *Kameradschaft* supporters? Certainly neither can be put into anything like the same category as the students of the "White Rose" group who clearly rejected all that the Nazis stood for, despite being unable to do anything very effective about it. If anybody deserves to be remembered from the Hamburg student community in this unhappy period it is they.

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by HAROLD HIMS WORTH

With a foreword by James D. Watson

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—James D. Watson, author of *THE DOUBLE HELIX* and winner of the Nobel Prize

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Homage to the inevitable

Helen McNeil

MICHEL GRESSET
A Faulkner Chronology
 120pp. University Press of Mississippi; distributed in the UK by Eurospan. Paperback, £7.95.
 0 87805 229 1
MAX PUTZEL
Genius of Place: William Faulkner's triumphant beginnings
 332pp. Louisiana State University Press. £30.40 (paperback, £14.20).
 0 8071 1183 X
HANS J. SKEI
William Faulkner: The novelist as short story writer
 332pp. Norwegian University Press; distributed by Oxford University Press. £22.50.
 0 20007303 3
ALAN WARREN FRIEDMAN
William Faulkner
 220pp. Lorriner. £10.95.
 0 8044 2218 4

When Malcolm Cowley tried in 1949 to persuade William Faulkner to provide autobiographical material for a proposed *Life* magazine feature, Faulkner replied, "I will protest to the last: no photographs, no recorded documents." The more famous Faulkner became, the more he wanted to be "voided from history", so that future readers would say only, "He made the books and he died". The immense accumulation of biographical and critical commentary since Joseph Blotner's 1974 *William Faulkner: A biography* has been grating on Faulkner's wish, albeit posthumously. Everything that Faulkner did, every redoubling in life and writing, every half-truth, every loss and failure, now seems meant (retroactively) to have led him to write his books and then die. Although these four studies by Michel Gresset, Max Putzel, Hans Skei and Alan Friedman differ in methodology, all endorse this teleology of genius; all are homages.

In *A Faulkner Chronology*, Gresset has revised, extended, and published separately the chronology he provided for his magnificent first volume of the *Pléiade* Faulkner in 1977. The result is a small book with the scholarly impact of a much larger one.

Gresset's chronology has much of the in-

formed modesty of Jay Leyda's logs of the lives of Herman Melville and Emily Dickinson, but while Leyda surrounded his subjects with context, Gresset works outwards from the texts, showing them interacting. This method highlights Faulkner's writing methods, particularly his habit of overlapping short story and novel composition, and his ability to write his way out of grief or loss. Thus the year 1931 saw the publication of sixteen stories, the composition of much of *Light in August*, the birth and death of an infant daughter, and complicated negotiations in New York with publishers and Hollywood producers. For the mysterious year 1928, when Faulkner wrote *The Sound and the Fury*, with a despairing energy born out of the rejection of *Flags in the Dust*, even Gresset can add little.

From Maurice Coindreau's translations and Sartre's famous essay on time in *The Sound and the Fury* through André Bleikasten, Gresset himself and the younger French Americanists (for whom work on Faulkner seems an almost inevitable *rite de passage*), Faulkner has always enjoyed a close relation to French scholars and critics. While the more European, tragic history of the South has been considered one reason for this affinity, I suspect that it may also be because a French Faulkner adds an otherwise missing kind of philosophical novel to France's own tradition. So pronouncedly French is this existential, Lacanian Faulkner that it comes as a slight surprise to recall that John Irwin's influential study, *Doubling and Incest/Repetition and Revenge: A speculative reading of Faulkner* (1975), was actually written in English. Gresset's *Faulkner, ou la fascination* (1982) continues this tradition.

Although Professor Putzel cites Geoffrey Hartman's seminal essay "Romantic Poetry and the Genius Loc" as one of the bases of his *Genius of Place: William Faulkner's triumphant beginnings*, his study is actually an argument for the coherence of Faulkner's early poetry, stories and novels up to *As I Lay Dying*. The specifics of Mississippi are not under discussion. Judith Sensibar's *The Origins of Faulkner's Art* (1984) has shown that the *pietrotique* stance of Faulkner's speaker in the verse play *The Marlowettes* and the poem sequence *Vision in Spring* is not merely part of a wasted poetic apprenticeship. Using Bleikasten's *Parcours de Faulkner* rather than the recently published Sensibar, Putzel also makes a case for continuity from the statue-hero of the poems to the passive Julian Lowe of *Soldiers'*

Pay and the more ambivalent heroes of the early short stories "The Leg", "Nympholepsy" and "The Hill".

Meticulously cognizant of the current state of Faulkner scholarship, Putzel often breaks off his own argument to give compositional, publishing and critical histories. This unpredictable movement makes his case seem diffuse. Yet his contribution is precisely in those narratives whose complicated origins have left their traces through a series of revisions. Working backwards, he locates the origins of Faulkner's epilogue to *Mosquitoes* both in the abortive satire *Elmer* and in the tonally very different dream narrative "Carcassonne". A bibliography of manuscripts concludes the volume.

Skei's *William Faulkner: The novelist as short story writer* is, surprisingly, the first full-length study to deal exclusively with Faulkner's stories. Skei's earlier *William Faulkner: The short story career* (1981), is, as he notes, a necessary companion for the present book. In fact, unless the reader has Skei's (or James B. Meriwether's or Gresset's) chronology to hand, Skei's interpretations of dozens of stories can seem to float in an ahistorical void. Although the stories are discussed in chronological order, their separation from collections and from the novels decreases, rather than intensifies, their impact.

Skei makes few judgments. Discussing "Beyond", a story from *Doctor Morino* in which a Mississippi judge is granted a vision of Heaven, Skei remarks that "Judge Allison encounters spirits who have obvious allegorical functions". He also notes, interestingly, that Faulkner's supernatural tales all lead to firmer understanding of this world. But are those obvious allegories failures of the Judge's imagination or of Faulkner's? If the "beyond" is tutelary in Faulkner, one might question why the dead are so often malevolent in his tales.

At times the study strains under its assignment of inclusiveness, as when the "strangeness and apparent inaccessibility" of "Black Music" and "The Leg" make it virtually impossible to give them satisfactory treatment, so that "a brief note . . . will have to suffice". This evades the issue that the problem with "The Leg" is its excess of signification; it is a kind of Purloined Leg, incorporating a double, a revenant, near-death by water, mutilation, a nymph-spirit of place, and a murder and attempted murder which are cunningly aided by the narrative. The tale is a jumbled

storehouse of motifs which Faulkner reworked elsewhere. Perhaps what is missing from Skei's study is, after all, the novels that these stories fed.

Despite the limitations of Ungers's *Literature and Life* series, Alan Warren Friedman's *William Faulkner* manages to offer a highly condensed but creditable thematic survey of Faulkner's novels. Friedman groups Faulkner's novels in thematic pairs rather than chronologically, taking failure and repetition as the essential themes. *The Sound and the Fury* and *Absalom, Absalom* are thus novels of "dark houses". The pairing of *Sanctuary* and *Requiem for a Nun* looks equally predictable, given the presence of the decadent belle Temple Drake in both. Friedman does not, however, take up Faulkner's fascination with violation and the explosive power of lust and curiosity. Rather he stresses "errors and trials" in a literal as well as symbolic sense, taking the novels' actual courtroom trials as provisional: "a revision . . . the creating of an official order out of relics called evidence, conflicting stories called testimony . . . Trials are also tests."

Friedman has organized his *William Faulkner* around the Yoknapatawpha County Faulkner whom Malcolm Cowley so skillfully packaged in *The Portable Faulkner*. Some anomalies result; *Soldiers' Pay*, Faulkner's first novel, only appears in a last, catch-all chapter of non-Yoknapatawpha tales. The poetry is barely mentioned, and the stories receive short shrift, as does Faulkner's role as a social novelist and revisionist historian.

Time and narrative are Friedman's main concerns, reflecting current appreciation of Faulkner's complex strategies for giving and withholding meaning, but Friedman's Faulkner still seems a writer about whom the major questions have already been asked. A less rigid division between form and content might not have led to the assertion that the "story" of *The Sound and the Fury* is "simple, but its telling is complex". While Gresset and Putzel are satisfied that Faulkner worked together with Ben Wasson at the painful task of cutting *Flags in the Dust* down to the published *Sartoris*, Friedman writes categorically that *Sartoris* is "a book he did not write". Unfortunately, with Anglophone readers have a text in which the contributions of the different manuscript versions are indicated, both the short and the long of the *Sartoris* saga must be regarded as corrupt texts.

Paradoxically, Cooper's success in creating Natty Bumppo and shaping an American saga around his life, constitutes the major obstacle to a fuller appreciation of his wider achievements. The question of who should own America, debated in Natty's encounters with civilization and its institutions, has obscured a second, equally compelling theme which underpins the other, but also derives in part from Cooper's difficulties in reaching his desired audience. Throughout his novels, but especially in *The Pioneers*, characters are shown busily trying, and often failing, to interpret a variety of documents, events or people. This feverish interpretative activity releases a good deal of incidental comedy among the minor characters, but more importantly, Wallace maintains, it allows Cooper subtly to chide his professional critics, to construct an implied reader for his fiction, and to acknowledge his actual readers' horizons of expectation.

The same theme also provides tantalizing clues to less obvious layers of meaning for Cooper's latter-day critics, and it is not surprising, therefore, to find three essays on *The Pioneers* among those chosen to appear in Robert Clark's new collection. Two of them - by Eric Cheyfitz and Richard Godden - include brilliant linguistic feats as a variety of covert meanings and messages are teased out of the text and extended through the novel. The third, by Charles Swann, involves a careful examination of contemporary American game laws in order to show how the furious debates about them in the novel serve to mediate the prevailing political ideology.

What distinguishes these essays and others in the volume, including those on Cooper's Indians by John P. McWilliams and Gordon

Brotherton and on the development of Cooper's social and political philosophy by Helen Lockstadt and Robert Clark, is the way in which glaring inconsistencies in the texts, so often passed over in silence or feebly excused by earlier critics, are relentlessly probed until they yield up nuggets of genuine psychological or historical significance. Cooper may not emerge from these examinations as a better novelist than before, but he certainly seems a more interesting one.

INFORMATION, PLEASE

Lady Christlone Herringham (1853-1909), translator of Cennini on fresco-painting, copyist and organizer of the 1909-12 expeditions for copying the Ajanta Cave paintings: any information about letters, drawings, paintings or other materials; for a monograph, and an exhibition at the Ruskin Gallery, Sheffield.

Mary Lago, St Edmund's House, Mount Pleasant, Cambridge CB3 0BN.

Margot Asquith (1864-1945): any information about the volume of Margot Asquith's diary covering January to October 1914; probably quarto in red cloth; no trace found though typescript thought to have been made; for an edition of the diaries, 1904-16.

Michael and Eleanor Brock, 186 Woodstock Road, Oxford OX2 7NQ.

December 7-8, 1941: first-hand reminiscences of these days; for a book evoking the period.

Stanley Weintraub, Institute for the Arts and Humanities Studies, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania 16802, USA.

A Chinese never-never land

D. J. Enright

ERNEST BRAMAH
Kai Lung's Golden Hours
 307pp. Oxford University Press. Paperback, £5.95.
 019 5839765

Ernest Bramah Smith - presumably he dropped the "Smith" in the interests of the exotic - was unusually versatile. Born in Manchester in 1869, he went in for farming, but failed. Thereupon he wrote a book entitled *English Farming and Why I Turned It Up*; this failed too. He then took a job as secretary to Jerome K. Jerome, and worked as a hack journalist. In 1900 he published the first of his quasi-Chinese, fable-like novels, *The Waller of Kai Lung*. Three further Kai Lung volumes came out between 1922 and 1940, but they remained cult books, and Bramah is most widely remembered, if only among older readers, for his stories about the blind detective, Max Carrados.

Kai Lung's Golden Hours (1922) is a model

Leaves from a Colonial Album

Africa. All smiles.
 My mother, draped in swathes
 of local cloth, takes a curtain-call
 to have me hoisted
 on her back, native style.

Here I am cradled by a stout,
 pipe-smoking administrator,
 ludicrously killed
 in flappy khaki shorts.
 The houseboy holds Teddy.

There's been some editing.
 No sign of my carriage-emptying
 ringworm, for instance, or
 of the stone-throwing rioters
 in the public squares.

This is pre-Independence
 paradise, a world of Brownie
 black and white; white smiles
 at the Club; on the beach,
 the white sand running for miles.

I help Daddy in the garden,
 lugging a giant watering-can
 I cannot lift; pose
 by the gardener's wheelbarrow;
 wave my spade. Then,

with one blurred bathtime
 for finale, the album
 petals out - ten empty pages
 dark as the interior, blank
 as memory. Africa and I

went our separate ways.
 I close the book and fondle
 the patch beneath my hair,
 corrugated into the one
 palpable legacy of empire.

SIMON RAB

of the story-teller's art, formally at any rate. In his own orientally self-deprecating words, Kai Lung is by profession "an incapable relater of imagined tales". He is falsely accused of diverse crimes by the malignant Ming-shu, secretary to the mandarin, Shan Tien, and condemned to death. Following the precedent of Scheherazade, he puts off the moment of execution by relating stories which touch on the Mandarin's current preoccupations or anxieties. In this he has inside help from the beautiful and enterprising Hwa-mei, a maiden of the Mandarin's court. The stories mostly tell of how, against fearful odds, the good or relatively good triumph over the downright wicked by virtue of their more efficient cunning or, in the manner of judo, by turning the enemy's brute force to their own advantage. In this they run parallel to the framing story of Kai Lung himself.

The stories are ingenious in the extreme, and (albeit bathed in irony) morally edifying. That they are hard to remember is in part due to the language in which they are luxuriously couched. As one character remarks, "When one is inquiring for a way of escape from an

advancing tiger, flowers of speech assume the form of noisome bindweed." But then, the language is the chief charm, as well as exasperation, of Bramah's procedure.

It is in the "oriental" tradition that proverbs and wise sayings should abound, attributed to sources and sages who may or may not exist, and whether discernibly apropos or not. In addition to the pervasively ornate style, we find here such instances as "every rope has two ends"; "the shadow moves as the sun directs"; "he who lacks a single nail sees many bargains"; "the lame duck should avoid the ploughed field"; "he who thinks that he is raising a mound may only in reality be digging a pit". Many of them sound like entries in a *New Statesman*-type competition calling for fabricated folksy wisdom from Stalin or Mao, gems whose glitter carries a hint of pae. "When the oil is exhausted the lamp goes out" - how perennially true that is! And indeed it is aptly said that "Milk by repeated agitation turns to butter". (Even though butter wasn't heard of at the putative time.)

Yet such pearls are not always gratefully received. When a youth quotes the royal philosopher's observation, "Better an earth-lined cave from which the stars are visible than a golden pagoda roofed over with iniquity", his aged mother retorts tartly: "The remark would have carried a weighty conviction if the broadminded sovereign had himself first stood the test of lying for a few years with enlarged joints and afflicted bones in the abode he so prudently recommended for others." Another character laments the inconvenience of living in a society where everyday affairs are regulated by sacred but antiquated proverbial wisdom. Bramah's China is a never-never land, if only because nothing would ever get done there.

Achieving the full bloom of the exotic may be a simple matter of replacing everyday words by poeticisms, kennings, or inkhorn terms. Vsmpires, we hear, "are by no means uncommon when the great sky-lantern is at its full distension", and "by, as it were, extending the five-fingered gesture of derision from the organ of contempt, you have invited the retaliatory propulsion of the sandal of authority". After encountering such sententious and lightly local-coloured phraseology as "there is often a space between the fish and the fish-plate" or "do not suffer the rice to grow above your ankles", we rumble what is going on. Common English idioms are being Chinese-fied, and you can easily translate back as you go along. "There are times", says Kai Lung in admiration of Hwa-mei's astuteness, "when the classical perfection of our graceful tongue is strangely inadequate to express emotion": words have failed him. "Our lord's trout were ever salmon": all his geese are swans. "Let the payment be made in pieces of metal and not in paper obligations": cash, not cheque. And "a bird in the soup is better than an eagle's nest in the desert" needs no gloss.

Although adding flavour to it, the language can obscure the humour. But not always. "He is not the god he was, even ten thousand cycles ago", a minor demon says of the supreme N'guk; and a warlord sadly unversed in the Classics observes that while weak in analogies he is strong in holocausts. Concerning falsification and face-saving on the part of historians, we gather that this same uncultivated person drove the Emperor out of his capital into the countryside; however, "with true refinement the annals of the period explain that the condescending monarch made a journey of inspection among the barbarian tribes on the confines of his Empire".

In a particularly nice tale, of "Chang Tao, Melodious Vision and the Dragon", Chang Tao demurs at his grandfather's exposition of the principle of progressive deterioration whereby grandfathers are wiser than fathers who are wiser than sons, and the grandfather replies that when he has sons of his own he will see things in their true perspective. Feminism has infiltrated the yamen: "Inspired by the upriser sisterhood of the outer barbarian lands, we of the inner chambers of the illimitable Kingdom demand the right to express ourselves freely on every occasion and on every subject, whether the matter involved is one that we understand or not." But when Melodious Vision tells her suitor that among those remote and otherwise uncounted tribes of the

custom for a woman to "enlarge his face in the eyes of a maiden" by forcing forth and slaying dragons, Chang Tao is swift to point out the false analogy: in those parts there are no real dragons, whereas in China there are.

That all this is far from being specifically oriental, indeed is of universal application, can be seen in the opening story, of how the Willow Pattern was conceived, and how labour-saving techniques of reproduction came to be invented, in the course of a strike by members of the Bound-together Brotherhood of Colour-mixers and Putters-on of Thought-out Designs. The strike was called on the grounds that one who was not of the Brotherhood was performing equal tasks for lesser rewards; and the three figures crossing the bridge in the design are the union leaders on their way to a lightly disguised pub. The Willow Pattern, we remind ourselves, was itself an English creation, a skillful example of chinoiserie.

What did Bramah really know about China, ancient or modern? Probably very little about any real China. In his introduction H. J. Lethbridge suggests that he had read Herbert Giles's popularizing translations and a volume or two in the *Wisdom of the East* series. Where *psitche* is concerned, a little knowledge is a sufficient thing. Given, that is, a lively imagination and a none too scrupulous gift for extrapolation. At times, though, Bramah betrays signs of a deeper expertise. Besides referring to geomancy and the venerable Tzu-lu (who here stakes his inner garment on a candidate in the Imperial Examinations) and, for once correctly, the Yangtze-kiang, he talks ironically of "a formidable display of chains, weights, presses, saws, branding-irons and other implements for securing justice"; torture was part of the legal system up to fairly recent times since a prisoner could not be sentenced until he had confessed. Someone's pace is compared to that of "a shell-cow upon two slabs of wood": a Chinese term for "snail" consists of the characters for "shell" and "cow". Also, the entrancing Hwa-mei is known as the Golden Mouse, "from the nature of her charm"; but it would be impugning Bramah's morals to suppose that he was aware of the indecent slang use of "mouse" to refer to the female parts.

Commenting that, at least until the advent of Charlie Chan (himself reassuringly Hawaiian), the role of Asians in crime fiction was confined to that of felons, Lethbridge claims that Kai Lung succeeded in partly cancelling out the sinister image of Fu Manchu and "helped to dismantle the stereotype of the Oriental as devious, cruel, and untrustworthy". That stereotype, I fear, imprinted itself on minds less ample than those capable of accommodating Kai Lung. The reader of Ernest Bramah must needs be a glutton for the comic-lapidary style, circuitous and convoluted, and the mock-berle mode, with a well-developed taste for ingenious but likewise stylized and leisurely plots: plots far removed from the scurrying and superficial incidents characteristic of Sax Rohmer, in whose fictions crises can occur at the rate of three a page. Bramah's place is in the more elevated, refined and sequestered reaches of the large and multifarious bazaar in which literary wares are offered for sale.

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American notes

Christopher Hitchens

There's no help for it. There will always appear to be something bizarre about those who campaign against pornography. Something, if you like, a little too interested. The connection of ideas is an old one. Samuel Johnson, when congratulated by some respectable ladies for excluding indecent words from his lexicon, observed smartly that he divined they had been looking for them. Graham Greene records that Wilson Harris, the stern editor of the *Spectator* was always filching books called *Married Love* and suchlike to carry off for his weekend perusal. Now we learn, from a memoir of the period, that he was in the habit of keeping dirty pictures between the leaves of his Bible.

The last image has been stuck in my mind ever since the Reagan Administration's Commission on Pornography began its work. I waited with the patience of a crocodile on the Justice Department wrote in the 7-11 supermarket chain, asking it to explain its merchandizing of *Penhouse* and *Playboy*. I maintained the compulsion of a sphinx when no less than 7,000 retail outlets removed those magazines from their shelves as a result, and again when I noted that the Commission on Pornography was taking advice from the Reverend Donald Wildmon, Executive Director of the National Federation for Decency, based in Tupelo, Mississippi.

How sweet the predictable can be. The Reverend Wildmon obliged in almost no time, by writing in his newsletter that "of the people who control television," no less than "fifty-nine per cent were raised in Jewish homes". Score one for the National Federation for Decency. But even swifter game was to come down the great path that Wildmon had flattened. Alfred Regnery, administrator of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention in the Department of Justice, and a man strong in the faith, was revealed to be a consumer rather

than a pursuer of the hellish output of Hefner and Guccione.

Not just Hefner and Guccione, either. Some while ago, during a police investigation, Regnery's home yielded a trove including "several catalogues for various prophylactic devices and erotica" and "a book with numerous colour photos of various sexual gratification, including oral sex and the placing of objects into the vagina". (The terrible prose of the police department has the effect, like all pseudo-detached accounts of pornography, of making it seem more rather than less obscene.) Regnery had been head of the anti-pornography campaign and had helped set up the investigating commission with a grant of \$125,000 from the Office of Juvenile Justice.

This same Regnery was briefly famous a short while ago for awarding a grant of \$789,000 to a former songwriter for the "Captain Kangaroo" show. The lady was to produce for the Justice Department a learned study of cartoons in *Penhouse*, *Playboy* and *Hustler*. The aim of the project was to discredit the Kinsey Report, even though Congressional inquiries failed to establish any very clear connection between the two enterprises.

As I write, bookshops and supermarkets all over the country are being pressed to remove what is laughingly called "adult" material from their shelves. In the absence of any standard of discrimination, there are no standards of discrimination. And since in many towns there is no working distinction between the bookshop and the supermarket, some districts are facing a return to the days of Babbalanza and the reign of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Regnery, of course, has resigned. And the Revd Wildmon will probably stumble through some clarification in due course. What distinguishes this campaign for "decency" from its predecessors is the direct and indirect support that it is gaining from radicals and feminists.

In the city of Minneapolis, for example, a coalition of feminists and Moral Majorityans forced a referendum on pornography, which

proposed to invigilate cinemas and bookshops. Elsewhere, the same improbable alliance is present. This has faced the libertarians, led as usual by the American Civil Liberties Union, with an unusual conundrum. On one wing are the moral guardians as old as Salem. On the other are what could be called fanatical modernists, with advanced views on the temple of the body. Both favour censorship though I should say in fairness that so far no member of Women Against Pornography has been exposed as a closet prurient, or secret smut-junkie.

This month's festival of the International Theatre Institute, held in Baltimore, Maryland, has made itself both contemptible and ridiculous by the decision to exclude the British entry. Sir Peter Hall's adaptation of *Animal Farm*, with lyrics by Adrian Mitchell, is in effect being presented as a fringe production, attracting large audiences and good reviews at the Morris A. Mechner Theatre, while the Theatre of Nations festival proceeds sedately without it.

The reason for this segregation is the objection from Soviet bloc participants to the contents of the play. Not that they *did* object; more that it was anticipated that they might. The wooden spoon award here goes to Wole Soyinka of Nigeria, President of the International Theatre Institute, who seems to have acted like the perfect bureaucrat. According to the *New York Times*, he "told the National Theatre that some of the 62 nations represented in the International Theatre Institute might be embarrassed by the production". In other words, he appointed himself the interpreter of Russian sensibilities.

The festival follows a triumphant tour of the United States by the Kirov ballet, and a great deal of high-minded talk about the importance of cultural exchange in these troubled times. It's difficult to be against cultural exchange, but a one-way street hardly qualifies as an ex-

change under any definition and there must be circumstances where the price is too high to be worth paying. This would certainly seem to be one such occasion - if it were not for the perfect illustration of Orwellian principles that it unintentionally provides.

A change of style at the *New York Times* puts me in mind of all those analogies about the speed with which supertankers alter course. A couple of thousand turns on the wheel, a mighty growling from the engine room, a long and pregnant pause, and finally the slight but perceptible alteration in the angle of the bow.

It has been many years since the great, gay *Times* first announced that it would not allow the feminine hourglass "ms" in its pages. This has led to protests by male and female staffers, to a picket by Gloria Steinem, the founder editor of *Ms* magazine, and to various letters, both intentional and otherwise. (The most grotesque of the latter was a bill from the *New York Times* advertising department sent to Miss Steinem, care of *Ms* magazine.)

Suddenly last week, the *Times*'s editor Abe Rosenthal announced that women need no longer be identified as married or unmarried. Those who wanted "ms" could have it. He gave no reason for the change, simply saying that the time for it had come. But this must be a delayed reaction to the foolish position that the paper got itself into over Geraldine Ferraro vice-presidential candidacy. Ferraro set it Congress under her maiden name, but was well known to be - in fact, notorious for being married to John Zaccaro, implicated on his own recidivism, the *Times* had the choice of calling her Miss Ferraro, which would have been absurd, Mrs Ferraro, which would have been inaccurate, or Mrs Zaccaro, which for all practical purposes was not her name. The easy, obvious and fair solution - Ms Ferraro - was denied to the paper by its own pig-headedness. This is one of those reforms which, once made, seems always to have been in force.

FIFTY YEARS ON

The TLS of June 27, 1936, contained a review by E. H. Carr of John L. Spivak's *Europe under the Terror*, from which the following extracts are taken:

Yet another American newspaper correspondent has made a tour of Europe and recorded his impressions in a book. Mr Spivak differs, however, from some of his colleagues who have preceded him in having had a definite purpose. He wished to make a study of those European countries which live "under the terror" of the modern totalitarian regime; and he has accordingly confined himself to Italy, Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia (where he limited himself to the quasi-autonomous Ruthene territory) and Austria.

Mr Spivak was fortunate in obtaining secret introductions from Communist friends outside to leaders of the underground movements in several countries visited. He was thus able to converse with a Communist disguised in Nazi

uniform in a Hamburg cabaret, to meet the leader of the Polish Communist Party in the streets of Warsaw, and to interview important Communists and Socialists in Vienna.

On the general situation in Italy and Germany Mr Spivak has little new to say. His persistence in putting awkward questions to Italian authorities suggests that he was extremely lucky to escape expulsion. From Germany he brings back several heart-rending stories of the persecution and boycott of Jews. But such stories are not hard to come by even without visiting Germany. Mr Spivak's account of Poland breaks newer ground, whether because Polish conditions are less familiar to the outside world, or because the "terror" is less well organized. His main impression was one of grinding poverty, and one is inclined to infer from his story that there is hunger rather than political conviction at the bottom of the widespread discontent which unquestionably exists in Poland.

AUTHOR, AUTHOR

Competition No 284

Readers are invited to identify the sources of the three quotations which follow and to send us the answers so that they reach this office not later than July 18. A prize of £20 is offered for the first correct set of answers opened on that date. The solution and results will appear on July 25.

1 I love unshowy power; my soft option when it comes to the metals - next to solder that weeps at the touch of a hot iron.

2 As if I heard the fiddle's call The power clatters on the wall.

3 The end is easily foretold, My long of blessed thing you hold Is made of silver or of gold, You long for simple power.

Competition No 285

Winner: Tony Inglis

Answers:

1 Names: Pilbeam - Koorndingtoo - Penardington - Ardington - Lindock - Sturch - Morrison-Morgan - Mellow - Newcome - Laidock - Bream - Branch

Deneber - Ilcombe - Donard - Cambelbridge - Mari (or place) - Norrington - Froy (or place) - Trumpet - Hunk - Vinty - Dunrose - Milrose - Coy - Match - Midmore.

Henry James, *The Notebooks*, 1899 (May 16)

2 From his gride hung a row of seastones which dangled at every movement of his portentous frame and on these were graven with rude yet striking images the tribal images of many Irish heroes and heroes of antiquity. Cuchullin, Conn of hundred battles, Dark Rosaleen, Patrick W. Shakespeare, Brian Confucius, Murrath Gutenberg, Patrick Velasquez, Captain Nemo, Tristan and Isolde, the first Prince of Wales, Thomas Cook and Son, the Bold Soldier Boy, Arrah na Pogue, James Joyce, *Ulysses*, (Cyclops).

3 Item to Guy Morgan and also Guy

Burgess and Ian Boag and Hector MacIver. And Robert Dunnell and Norman Cameron I leave a bag of whiskey, the sweet deceiver. Louis MacNeice, from "Auden and MacNeice: Their Last Will and Testament" (*Letters from Ireland*, chapter 17).

Letters

'The Minister and the Massacres'

Sir - Robert Knight's review of my book *The Minister and the Massacres* (June 13) contains so many misrepresentations of the book's contents, tendentious arguments and distortions of the evidence that it would take more space than your correspondence columns permit to answer them in full. I shall avail myself of an opportunity to do that elsewhere, but meanwhile perhaps I may be permitted to point out some of the more obtrusive errors.

The first two columns of the review are devoted to a blanket assertion that my "understanding of the historical context is deeply flawed"; in other words, my bias is so patent that I am incapable of assessing the evidence candidly. Thus Mr Knight notes scathingly that I refer to the Germans as the "formidable protectors" of the Slovenian population [sic]. The reference in question (p29) is in fact to a specific group of Slovenian refugees fleeing into Austria. Moreover, the description of the Germans as having been "their formidable protectors" is clearly lacking in any qualitative connotation, and the context is their collapse into drunkenness and indiscipline.

With pointed sarcasm, Knight goes on to note that "not surprisingly, an account of such eccentricity has no room for the Cossacks' brutal record in Russia, their help in suppressing the Warsaw uprising, or their depredations in Croatia". It would be indeed surprising if I had referred to the first two charges, since the Cossacks in Austria had played almost no part in the fighting in Russia and were not present at the suppression of the Warsaw uprising. And in my brief summary of 15th Cossack Cavalry Corps' activities in Croatia I make explicit references to their indiscipline and support for the Serbs against the Croats.

This introductory approach, clearly designed to "warn off" the reader against pursuing the real subject-matter of the book, is becoming a familiar one. In a semi-official assessment in the *Daily Telegraph*, John Keegan asserted that "Tolstoy's version is one to which Tsarist émigrés threaten to capture the soul of the Red Army at the moment of its greatest victory, in which the ancient tribal quarrels of Serb and Croat are invested with eternal qualities of right and wrong...". Though challenged repeatedly to cite a single instance of my advancing these absurd views, Keegan has so far declined to reply.

As far as the facts are concerned, Knight is at pains to show that on every possible occasion I have distorted, falsified or suppressed evidence inconsistent with my overall conclusions. The major charge advanced in my book is that the tsarist émigré officers among the Cossacks were knowingly included among the Soviet citizens returned, and that this was contrary to all operational instructions. To this Knight replies emphatically: "There is constant reference to orders for the Cossacks to be individually screened - allegedly ignored by the conspirators - but not one is ever cited."

On page 215 I cite the order FX 79904, dispatched from Alexander:

1. all who are Soviet citizens and who can be handed over to Russians without use of force should [be] returned direct by Eighth Army.
2. any others should be evacuated to 12 Army Group.
3. definition of Soviet citizen is given in AFHQ letter of 6 May... ref your A 4073 of 21 May asking for policy re Cossacks.

I quote numerous instructions to the same effect and, contrary to Knight's implication, at no time was another policy contemplated in written operational orders at any level.

Following this, Knight moves on to "larger, more serious weaknesses" in Tolstoy's account. The first of these, he claims, is my argument (reflecting *hinter alla* the attestations of General Keightley's Brigadier A/Q and the commander of 6th Armoured Division) that Keightley and his troops were most reluctant to return any Cossacks, émigré or Soviet, right up to the moment of Macmillan's visit to 5th Corps HQ on May 13.

In support of his counter-argument he points out that on May 12 Keightley is on record as reproving Brigadier Scott for having accepted the surrender of 15th Cossack Cavalry Corps, thus this "might produce some international incident". This is correctly quoted from my

book, but what Knight unaccountably omits is the vital piece of evidence which follows. I show clearly that though Keightley did indeed express a wish that the surrender had not taken place, once it was completed he felt himself in honour bound to treat his prisoners according to the terms of the Geneva Convention. Immediately following his reproof to Scott, he intervened personally to ensure that Cossacks withdrawing behind British lines should not fall into Red Army hands.

Next, in order to demonstrate Macmillan's naivety at the time of his arrival, Knight asserts that he knew nothing of the distinction between Soviet and non-Soviet citizens, since "the tsarist émigrés had not been explicitly excluded in [Macmillan's] previous instructions, as Tolstoy suggests".

Among a sheaf of copies of documents relevant to this issue lying before me is Macmillan's telegram to the Foreign Office of July 27, 1944, in which he emphasizes that "both we and A.F.H.Q. would like to receive a full definition... of policy to be pursued towards Russians of all kinds who fall into British hands in this theatre". This policy he understood to involve a clear distinction between "male Soviet nationals who... [have] served in German military or para military formations... [and] will be repatriated to Russia"; and "men of Russian nationality who are not Soviet citizens and who are caught serving in German military or para military formations [who] will be regarded as prisoners of war".

Macmillan anticipated, the Foreign Office confirmed his assumption with a ruling on February 19, 1945, that the former should be repatriated and the latter retained.

As virtually all Knight's criticisms are conducted with a like disregard for the evidence set out before him in the pages of my book, space does not here permit further detailed refutation, which will in any case be conducted elsewhere. Here I will confine myself to Knight's alternative thesis, for even he admits (though referring to the matter with what might appear extreme drumspection) that the 70,000 people returned suffered an appalling fate. Some explanation is therefore called for, and Knight's may be summarized as follows.

General Keightley, he claims, consistently regarded the Cossacks and Yugoslavs in his charge as an embarrassment to be got rid of as expeditiously as possible. With many pressing considerations on his mind, their ultimate fate was for him a matter of limited concern. Macmillan arrived on May 13 to discuss the general picture, ignorant of Foreign Office policy on the distinction to be drawn between Soviet and non-Soviet citizens, which as a result he quite possibly never discussed. He returned to Caserta, where he played no further part in the matter.

The handovers were purely the affair of the military, who decided that the handover of the surrendered Cossack and Yugoslav personnel to their enemies was the most convenient solution. The inclusion of the White Russians not liable for return was likewise a purely pragmatic affair.

The likely reason is both simple and unpalatable. To those chiefly responsible at 5th Corps Headquarters - neither the fate of a number of collaborators (and their German officers) nor their precise legal status were of much concern who set against the desire to clear their area of an unwanted burden as quickly as possible and keep on good terms with the local Soviet commanders.

Though Knight delicately avoids pursuing his alternative theory to its logical conclusions, it inevitably presents an appalling picture of all British soldiers concerned. His version implies that Keightley and his officers had no regard for the rights of surrendered enemy personnel under the terms of international law and normal military etiquette; that they deliberately concealed from Macmillan the presence of the tsarist officers in order ultimately to effect their illicit handover; that they went out of their way to deliver their charges to "slavery, torture and probably death" (Macmillan's words), rather than fulfil Alexander's instructions to evacuate the Cossacks to Shofar and the Yugoslavs to Italy; and that they illegally banded over the old émigrés in order to avoid a minor administrative inconvenience. Field Marshal Alexander was well aware of virtually all that was passing, to which he raised no serious objection.

To support these allegations Knight is obliged to resort to suppression of the facts and distortion of the evidence far in excess of that which he misguidedly attributes to me. To my knowledge he has never spoken to a single soldier serving in Austria at that time; and he does so he might have found his argument rather harder to sustain. Keightley's expressed repugnance to delivering any Cossacks to the Soviets is attested by a senior surviving staff officer, Brigadier Tryon-Wilson, and his intervention on the eve of Macmillan's arrival to protect the surrendered Cossacks from the Red Army by Colonel Murphy Palmer of the Royal Irish Fusiliers. Both officers were eyewitnesses to the scenes they described, and both are still living.

A major stumbling-block in Knight's argument arises in the shape of Macmillan's unguarded reference in his diary account of the meeting of May 13 to "40,000 Cossacks and 'White' Russians", thus apparently revealing his awareness of the presence of the non-Soviet officers. Knight ingeniously exploits this away as a reference to Rugozhin's entirely separate White Russian Corps from Serbia, also held at this time in 5th Corps area. Unfortunately for this interpretation is the fact that Macmillan goes on to state of the "Cossacks and 'White' Russians" that "we have decided to hand them over". But no Rugozhin's Corps was in fact not considered for handover, the reference cannot apply to them.

One of Knight's general criticisms of my book is that I "set great store by eyewitness accounts", which for some reason he regards as of little or no value to the academic historian. But what Macmillan says is surely of equal evidential value to what he writes, and the omission of any reference to the only explanation of his actions Macmillan has given in public seems puzzling indeed.

In his 1984 television interview with Ludovic Kennedy, Lord Stockton said of the "verbal directive" he gave to Keightley:

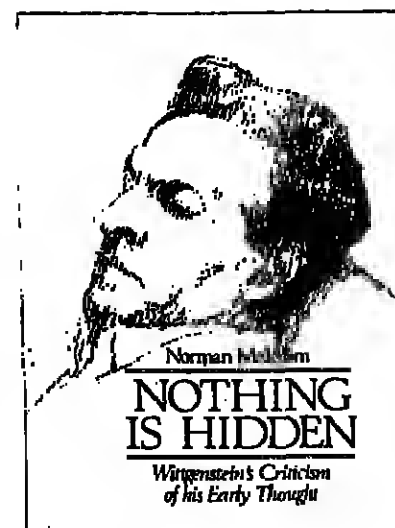
Then we were to give back to the Russians the Cossacks and other Russian people, Russian subjects who'd been fighting for or supporting Germany and the only thing to do was to carry [it] out. It was harsh in some ways, because no doubt some of these White Russians were people who'd been, well, were against the Communist régime for years. Still, they were on [the] Germans' side and working with the Germans.

Knight also fails to mention Macmillan's successive reports to the Foreign Office on his return. They unaccountably omit all reference to his decision to band back the Cossacks, and ignore the very presence of the Yugoslavs whose return he "recommended".

Knight's claim that the handovers derived exclusively from the soldiers' "desire to clear their area of an unwanted burden as quickly as possible" is so readily refuted by the facts that one wonders at his purpose in advancing it. On May 17 Alexander issued orders which would have cleared the Corps area of Cossacks and Yugoslavs overnight. Yet (explicitly, if Knight's version be correct) Keightley went out of his way to obstruct and evade these orders - with what result? Instead of accepting the speedy and peaceful discharge of his unwelcome responsibility, he deliberately delayed the evacuation in order to effect operations which, setting aside the brutality and treachery implicit, involved unnecessary delay, much more complex arrangements, and above all put British soldiers' lives seriously at risk.

The Cossacks at Lienz were not disarmed until the eve of the handovers, and then only under the supervision of their own officers. It was rightly suspected that arms had been retained, and Brigadier Musson's operational order for the handover stressed that "you must regard this duty as an operation of war". The military were almost without exception brutal and insensitive is a cardinal principle of Knight's argument, but it surely takes some explaining why they went to such lengths to risk the lives of their own men in this superfluous fashion?

I have dealt in the limited space available with some of Knight's wilder accusations. In fact, however, the main substance of the evidence on which I rely for my argument he ignores altogether. All I can suggest to readers concerned to know the truth about this terrible story is that they read my book with Knight's review to hand, and judge for themselves how



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COMMENTARY

A sense of doom

Richard Langham Smith

Omaggio a Debussy
La Scala, Milan

La Scala's *Omaggio a Debussy* festival, which runs until July 4, is centred on Claudio Abbado's first ever *Pelléas et Mélisande*, his swansong as resident maestro before Riccardo Muti takes his place. Numerous surrounding Debussy projects remind me that the Italian delight in *spettacolo* remains as eager as ever. *La Cathédrale Englobée* and the little-known *Rhazma* are among the ballets, while the "Children's Scala" are presenting a double-bill of *La Botte à Joux* and *Children's Corner*, the former in a version which includes shadow-theatre. Most uninitiated is the planned staging of *The Fall of the House of Usher* scheduled for early June but postponed, ironically because the theatre is falling down.

From the cast-list this looks the most ambitious event of all: it is dramatized by Pierluigi Pieri and includes a specially made film; it also lists the composer as playing a role in the action. We know from Debussy's letters that he identified with the neurotic Rodrick Usher, and it may well be that in this treatment will be the salvation of this dubious work (reconstructed from extremely sketchy sketches which Debussy worked on over long periods). On the other hand it may join the ranks of the many *spettacoli*, combinations of audacity and hi-tech, which have failed to find an audience outside Italy. When *The Fall of the House of Usher* was performed in London, in a semi-staged version, one felt the need for some sort of scenic approach - rattling doors or cracks appearing in walls - to complement the

shudder one senses in this extraordinary score.

This darker, Poeian element has long been recognized as an important undercurrent in Debussy's work, emerging strongly in his treatment of Maeterlinck's *Pelléas et Mélisande* even if his settings of Poe's works never came to fruition. Papers presented in the imaginatively conceived and well-attended international conference, which was the academic arm of the festival, probed further into some of these literary projects. Much discussed was Debussy's incidental music for D'Annunzio's masochistic play, *Le Martyre de Saint-Sébastien*. This piece was also given a fully staged production: all we usually hear is an orchestral suite. There were two evenings of *inédits*: songs and a cantata by the Pamassian Théodore de Banville, and extracts from the composer's only other opera apart from *Pelléas et Mélisande*, curiously based on a version of *El Cid*. The Banville cantata is an interesting find. Not only does it have an appealing lyricism, but it was the text on which Mallarmé based his *Fantaisie*.

With a mainly German cast (Frederica von Stade as Mélisande) and with sets stressing milky suns and the Gothic arches of Ghent, Abbado's *Pelléas et Mélisande*, staged by Antoine Vitez, took us at once to the landscape which lay behind Maeterlinck's original conception. And by setting the earlier scenes of *Pelléas et Mélisande*'s developing love on a rock-pooled sea-shore, and returning to it for the scene where Yniold struggles to move a rock, Vitez not only stressed the childlike quality of the lovers (and reminded us of Eustace and Hilda) but also unified this often awkward scene with the rest of the opera. Less effective is the Poeian side: the Scala production ultimately lacked the sense of doom of Maeterlinck's plays.

A feel for flight

Patricia Craig

Lamb
Various cinemas

After the success of *Cal*, it was inevitable that someone would make a film of Bernard Mac Laverty's first novel *Lamb*, in which an Irish Christian Brother, on the teaching staff of a remand home, runs off with one of the boys in his charge; and here it is. It is a quiet, thoughtful novel, which shouldn't, on the face of it, transfer too well to the screen. *Lamb*, however - directed by Colin Gregg, and with a screenplay by Mac Laverty himself - gets off to an impressive start. We have the remand home splendidly situated on a promontory, the inmates in the carpentry workroom attaching crucified figures to pieces of wood, the oh-nxious Brother Benedict - well portrayed by Inn Bannon - inflicting the utmost psychological damage on his pupils. "A finishing school for the sons of the Idle Poor", is his tag for the place, to which his subordinate, Brother Sebastian, provides a tart rejoinder: "It finishes them all right." Brother Sebastian, whose worldly name is Michael Lamb, stands for sanity and good nature, and the point of the book is to show how, in the crippling circumstances of his life, nothing but an unproductive outlet awaits these qualities. Lamb of God or sacrificial lamb, it is all one as far as Brother Sebastian is concerned.

Owen Kane, twelve in the novel and ten in the film (where Hugh O'Connor tackles the part with good sense and steadiness), is the boy, of all the boys in the home, singled out for special treatment by Michael Lamb. Owen is a Dublin delinquent afflicted with epilepsy and

incontinence. He is also an ordinary boy, from whose life certain standard ingredients, like affection and attention, are unfortunately missing. Lamb takes it upon himself to make good the loss. His own religious doubts, coupled with a small legacy from his father, who has just died, propel him towards drastic action. The home is left behind, and a new relation - that of father and son - devised for the absconding twosome, whose flight to London is effected without obstruction at any stage. Even Owen's tendency to call his companion "Brother" in public places doesn't land them in the soup. We can't help but feel that an opportunity was missed to exploit the element of suspense, even if the novelist's intention was rather more subtle than this. The cinema adaptation, after all, cannot duplicate exactly the novel's concern with motives and feelings, however much it makes of the Icarus myth (a feature of the book) and other enriching or elucidating motifs.

Once the film moves away from Ireland, a slight deterioration overtakes it (extending even to the camerawork, which immediately becomes less spectacular). It is as if an element of uncertainty has entered. True, we see Owen living the life of Riley, getting togged up in modern clothes, having a whale of a time in an amusement arcade, painstakingly constructing a model aeroplane. Every dog must have its day - and it's Lamb's task to see that Owen has his, the odd wrangle or two notwithstanding. But the London atmosphere - let alone the atmosphere of tension and intrigue that should surround the innocent runaway pair - doesn't for some reason get an adequate embodiment. However, what lends coherence to the film, and makes it memorable, is the performance of Liam Neeson (a doughty and amiable Lamb), which is outstanding.

Models of propriety

Marc Jordan

La Sculpture Française au XIXe Siècle
Galerie Nationales du Grand Palais, Paris,
until July 28

Sepia-tinted photographs line the entrance to this exhibition. They show distinguished gentlemen in heavy tweeds or frock coats standing self-consciously amid the surprisingly bourgeois hric-à-brac of the sculptor's studio. François Jouffroy strikes a pose à la Chateaubriand, a discreetly draped bust of Venus the only due to his profession. Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux, with grizzled beard and smoking cap, looks like a Garibaldi of the atelier. The lineup includes one or two women: the imposing figure of Charlotte Besnard modelling two little girls, Sarah Bernhardt, in a hat, pressing clay on to a bust of Edmond Rostand. Here and there a little of *la vie de bohème* seeps in. The student of Falguère's atelier exchange topkats for turbans with their black coats and a long-suffering model poses with a starch-colored *raphia* hand clutching her left breast.

Many of these sculptors were, unlike their eighteenth-century predecessors, exclusively modellers. The hard labour was done by others. In Edouard Dantan's painting "Le mouleur sur nature" a naked girl stands patiently as two overalled artisans encase her in wet plaster. An anonymous photograph shows a marble-carver's workshop where statues by Picault, Vidal, Larche and Lambert are taking shape far from the sculptors' studios. The invention of the pointing machine and other mechanical aids made it possible to copy or enlarge from terracotta or plaster models and freed the artist from the dirt and discomfort of the mason's yard. Auguste Clésinger was thought exceptional by his contemporaries because he worked his marble himself. Only the eccentric, avant-garde artist (Georges Lacombe or Aristide Maillol, for instance) thought it a necessity to carve his own works. Even Rodin, who began his career as a stone cutter, had his team of *practiciens* as soon as he could afford it.

Photography played an ever larger part as the nineteenth century wore on. Baudelaire stated in 1859 that photography would be the death of art, but what is remarkable in the collections of photographs that can be associated with particular sculptors is the use to which they put this new tool. Henri Greber deployed the instinctive skills of the society portraitist to turn four snaps of the stocky, bow-legged figure of Emmanuel Frémiet into an image of benign elegance. Rupert Carlin derived the svelte, adolescent body of his "Légende Savernoise" from photographs of the buxom professional models of Montmartre.

The serial images of photography were reflected in the reduction and multiplication of sculptures. From the 1830s, statuettes, designed for middle-class bedrooms or salons and reproduced by the hundred in silver, bronze, ivory or plain cheap plaster, were the staple of many sculptors' careers. James Pradier must have been a rare example of an academically trained artist and regular Salon exhibitor who had no misgivings about making works which, in their cheapest forms might be, as contemporary photographs here show, hawked from trays and barrows in the streets of Paris.

The training of sculptors who wanted to make respectable public careers was a virtual monopoly of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. A row of *thés d'expression* mutely mouthing passions from vengeance to despair (and more inscrutable emotions like "anger mixed with disdain") shows how little the exercises which won the academy's coveted prizes, the key to worldly success, changed in the course of a century. The most coveted prize of all was the famous "Prix de Rome", which entitled the winner to spend five years at the State's expense in Rome. The conditions of the competition were gruelling: the theme and presentation conservative. Until 1865 the subject, always presented as a bas-relief in plaster, was invariably from Classical history. Variations on the theme

of "The Foundation of Marseilles" from the "liberal" competition of 1865 only differ from earlier efforts by their substitution of Gallic trousers and mustaches for the togas and beards of the Greeks.

While a thematic rather than strictly chronological approach makes this huge show illuminating, it also makes for strange bedfellows. In a darkened, mirror-lined cavern Degas's "Pe-

where energy and *joie de vivre* find expression in the Neo-Baroque of Carpeaux's "La Danse" and other models for the extravagant celebratory monuments of the Second Empire, while a downbeat Realism in the work of Aimé-Jules Dnolou and Henri Chapu was in favour under the Third Republic.

Altogether more satisfactory than such uncertain stylistic omnium gatherums is the

inlaid with statues, busts and reliefs. And it was at this period that the enormous statues of the Virgin which are still such a feature of French provincial towns were put up by local Catholic societies supported by government grants. The mechanism of government finance, of artistic competitions, of municipal and local initiatives and subscriptions is clearly exposed.



"Attention mûlée de crainte", "Colère mûlée de mépris" and "Dédain", three "thés d'expression" entered for the annual competitions at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts; from the exhibition reviewed here.

te danseuse de quatorze ans" occupies a niche next to one of Jean-Léon Gérôme's bizarre and provocative nudes. Both are polychromatic attempts to escape the tyranny of white marble. On a brightly lit, raked, white stage, Pierre-Charles Simart's finely chiselled Orestes of 1839 confronts Maillol's chunky nude personification of the Mediterranean of 1905. To call this "the Classical Tradition" perhaps begs too many questions. Even more various is the section called "L'Esprit Romantique". Antoine-Louis Barye's wild animals in bronze confront David D'Angers's interpretation of the wild talent of Paganini. The limp Troubadour anecdotalism of Fédide de Fauveau contrasts with the violence and tenderness of Auguste Préault, the least well known of the great French Romantics. Else-

dramatic central point of the show which explores the crucial issue of publicly commissioned and financed sculpture in nineteenth-century France. A colossal plaster-cast of François Rude's "La Marseillaise" dominates the sketch models and casts for the major sculptural projects of the century. Sculpture and politics are inextricably mingled. The Restoration government completed the Madeleine as a vast expiatory chapel. Louis-Philippe, one foot on land and one foot in sea, designated the Arc de Triomphe a monument to the armies of the Revolution and began the tomb of Napoleon in the Invalides. But it was Napoleon III who best understood the use of sculpture as propaganda and ornament for his prosperous régime. The rebuilt Louvre and Tuileries and the lush new Opéra were all

This spectacular and intelligent exhibition has been treated with undeserved coolness in the French press. Anne Pinget of the Musée d'Orsay and her team of collaborators have overcome the practical difficulties of putting on a big sculpture show. They have also overcome many of the intellectual difficulties of presenting the little-known and unloved plastic art of the last century to the non-specialist. By posing and answering the question "Pourquoi tant de sculptures?", they have given nineteenth-century French sculpture the context it has lacked in previous studies. The result is an exhibition and catalogue (edited by Anne Pinget 472pp. Editions de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 220 Fr. 2 7118 2062 9) which are major contributions to the current reevaluation of nineteenth-century art.

Letters

for he has succeeded in his attempt to deflect the responsibility for the massacres from Macmillan to the British Army.

Knight's review is written in a style very much *ad hominem*, accusing me of deliberate distortions influenced by personal bias. In my book I make it clear that I do indeed have a strong sympathy for the Cossacks, alongside whom my grandfather fought as a liaison officer with the British in 1919. Equally I have no motivation for exculpating the person or persons really responsible of what was by any standards a major war crime, in order to deflect responsibility on to an innocent party.

I do not accuse Knight of political bias, but since we are on the subject of personal preferences it may not be inappropriate to note that he, too, may have his (undeclared) preferences. On October 16 last year Mr Knight delivered a seminar at London University, which consisted in large part of an attack on my personal integrity and historical impartiality. In December the Communist Yugoslav authorities invited him, together with a small group of historians sympathetic to the Partisan cause, to a symposium in Ljubljana. The session of December 10 was devoted exclusively to the question of the Yugoslav evacuation into Austria, which the Yugoslav press had earlier noted was to comprise the subject-matter of my forthcoming book. It was entitled: "Search for Historical Truth only in Open Dialogue". Precisely what this search entailed was summarized in the Ljubljana newspaper *Delo*, which noted that: "Today's session centred above all on the concentration of the counter-revolutionary quisling formations in Carinthia and Venezia Giulia and on the attitude of the British Military Government towards them".

NIKOLAI TOLSTOY,
Court Close, Southmoor, nr Abingdon, Berkshire.

To coincide with the sixtieth anniversary this October of the publication of Montague Summers' *Witchcraft and Demonology* it is hoped to erect a Stone on Summers' hitherto unmarked grave in Richmond Cemetery. Details of the project are available from Sandy B. Robertson at Wellington Court, 41 Mayfield Road, London W12.

'My Sweet Lord'

Sir, - This is in no way a letter plugging the Hare Krishna movement - their hideously gaudy temples, devoid of all aesthetic sense, should come as a shocking surprise even to those who laud their scholarship and dedication to the *Bhagavad Gita*. However, since A. David Jones in his review of Kim Knott's *My Sweet Lord* (May 23) seems a bit confused in his last paragraph between the "traders" following the path of the *Gita* and those of "modern society" following their "competitive sales perks" one feels he should realize that even in their similarity there is a real difference. The "Karmy" traders see trading as an end in itself, so to speak. The devotees of the *Gita* see it as an activity in which they have to partake in order to rise above it and be a man of *Salva*, which is man's evolutionary destiny - the entire purpose of life.

To put it simply, it's not what you do that matters, it is the spirit of detachment with which you attend to life's "chores" which ensures you do them well and (freeing yourself of them thus) rise above them. Seeing all that as *maya* does not mean you can rise above it by ignoring it. To do one's duty at every stage of life well (and the "letting go" spirit of detachment ensures that) is the ultimate way of putting it in its place.

S. N. NANPORIA,
Jupiter Apartments, 6th Floor, Flat 61, Anstey Road, off Allamont Road, Bombay, India.

'Moderns and Contemporaries'

Sir, - Mr Sexton is becoming tiresome (Letters, June 6). In my last letter (May 23) I provided some details of the way in which he had chosen to misrepresent my book. Instead of having the courtesy to deal with these merely repeats, his entirely baseless charge about my readiness to enter into "invidious debates". But what is invidious to him is perfectly visible to other people and he really shouldn't parade his ignorance as though it were a form of knowledge.

As to his equally baseless charge that I fail to

give place and time of original publication, I had better spell the matter out so there can be no further room for doubt. Where an essay first appeared in a book-length collection I give on the acknowledgements page details of publication, including date. Where an essay began life as a review article I give on the acknowledgements page the original place of publication and at the end of the essay itself I give details of the book(s) under review, including dates. This strategy was suggested by my editor at Harvester Press and I assume it to be house policy. I would also have thought it sufficiently clear to allow even Mr Sexton to work out when the review was likely to have first appeared. Where no acknowledgements are given it can be assumed that the essays were intended for first publication in the book. There are two exceptions: the obituary piece on Edgell Rickwood (died 1982) and the essay on Roethke, which originally appeared in a long-defunct magazine, and which Harvester saw no reason to acknowledge. But in case there should be any doubt as to when it was written I may note that in the second paragraph I say that Roethke has been dead for five years and in the third give the date of his death.

JOHN LUCAS,
19 Devonshire Avenue, Beeston, Nottingham.

Proust and Agostinelli

Sir, - Francis Steegmuller, in his review (May 30) of Philip Kolb's edition of Proust's correspondence for 1914, states that the plane in which Alfred Agostinelli crashed and was drowned had been "a gift from Proust". George C. Painter, on the other hand, says, in page 212 of his second volume of Proust's life, that Agostinelli "had enrolled at the flying school of the Garbero brothers", from whose aerodrome he set out on his fatal flight, which suggests that the aircraft in fact belonged to them.

The point is important for any assessment of Proust's munificence, since an aeroplane would have been at least as costly a gift in 1914 as it would be today.

FREDDY HURDIS-JONES,
Santa Eufemia 68/A, Venice.

'The Enigma of Piero'

Sir, - I write with reference to the review by David Summers of Carlo Ginzburg's *The Enigma of Piero*. (May 23). The three angels holding garments or towels appear in representations of the baptism of Christ from the earliest examples in Christian art. They are present in all Byzantine representations of the subject of whatever date, so far as I know without exception. Piero della Francesca was simply following a tradition already ancient, which can have nothing to do with anything that happened in 1439.

P. G. SUAREZ,
Flat 1, 86 Redcliffe Gardens, London SW10.

'The Faber Book of Political Verse'

Sir, - George Steiner (May 23) refers to the Ugolino episode from the *Inferno*, the first selection in Tom Paulin's *Faber Book of Political Verse*, as "this all-too-familiar purple passage". What can the critic mean? Does he mean it has become too hackneyed and boring to be of interest, like, say, "To be or not to be"? Then: "purple passage". Dante to an off-moment, being too high-flown and sentimental? It's a puzzle. One's at a loss, as Steiner professes to be about so many of Paulin's choices.

BERNARD MCCABE,
9a Tanza Road, London NW3.

Andrew Young

Sir, - I applaud Grevel Lindop's perceptive review of Andrew Young's *Poetical Works* (June 13), but when he writes of "the 1950 Faber *Collected Poems*", a small masterpiece of book-design where the "canoe" of Young's mature shorter poems was complemented by Joan Hassall's mysterious yet incisive wood-cuts, he falls into a double error. That book appeared in 1960, not 1950, and was published not by Faber but by no.

RUPERT HART-DAVIS,
The Old Rectory, Marske-in-Swaledale, Richmond, North Yorkshire.

COMMENTARY

Handwritten note in the right margin: "The Enigma of Piero" (referring to the letter to George Steiner).

Oxbridge to Ru-in

John Melmoth

JOHN TREHERNE
Mangrove Chronicle
224pp. Corgi. £9.50.
0234202772

Like John Treherne's last novel, *The Trap*, *Mangrove Chronicle* begins life as a breezily competent campus story only to emerge as something completely different. *The Trap* fled the senior common room into uncanny recall of a childhood spent in rural Wiltshire in the 1930s. *Mangrove Chronicle* takes only a little more trouble to achieve a plausible Oxbridge before taking flight for the South Pacific, swapping academic politics for issues of death and survival.

James Yeo is a don in his early fifties, a history man more in the mould of Jim Dixon than Howard Kirk, a researcher of the wool trade in Cricklade (1536-1546), uncomfortably conscious of his seniority over his more egregious and radical colleagues - "poor scholars with disabling personal problems". Teaching is not without its rewards, in spite of the continuing and muddling knowledge of De Freville, nor is he noticeably disenchanted with the baroque pedantry of an institution capable of heated feelings about the colour of the roses in the college gardens or the contraceptive preferences of the undergraduates. He is also a keen amateur ornithologist, in which capacity he teams up with the obnoxious Oakley who, in order to push back the frontiers of "rectal science", is willing to spend his life as a man taking rear views of a variety of insects. Expert at soliciting funds for these researches, Oakley proposes a trip to the Manabau archipelago (also known as the Tmiquil Isles, which fact guarantees subsequent breaches of the peace) in the company of De Freville and Doris, an American feminist heretic. Yeo is determined at all costs, and in spite of all frustrations (including a farcical tryst with Oakley's "naked piranha" of a wife), to get a few weeks in the sun. What he actually gets is, of course, a good deal more than he bargained for.

Scarcely have the travellers reached the South Seas before their research vessel, which bears a discomfiting resemblance to the African Queen, is wrecked on the unpromisingly named Ru-in. Having left the academy behind, they are performance engaged in more elemental struggles. (Much of the detail for this *Robinsonade* is apparently drawn from Treherne's *The Galapagos Affair*, a study of proto-hippie-dom off the Ecuadorian coast.) Their initial

response to their predicament is both literary - they remember the worried lords and retainers of Prospero's enchanted isle - and whimsical - Yeo shrilly thinks of himself "battering fish or strangling Mangrove Herons... slitting up coconut palms". However, as the seriousness of their plight sinks in, Doris's growing forthrightness backs Yeo into epiphanic self-analysis. He is compelled to take stock of himself as too "specialized", "totally useless", "middle aged and childless, incompetent... squatting insignificantly on my academic dunghill".

An intolerable situation is made worse by the ironic fact that the purpose of the trip is fulfilled beyond all expectations. They make a number of ornithological and archaeological discoveries which pale into insignificance when confronted with the realities of starvation. In what may have been conceived as a malicious comment on the life of the mind but looks like simple malice, Treherne allows Doris to bag and cook a brace of incredibly rare birds. Even at *extremis* Yeo can scarcely contain his indignation: "It was like burning the Mona Lisa to make toast or smashing the Elgin Marbles for a rockery." Fortunately, Doris is on hand to provide a more mature perspective: "Screw the Cricklade wool trade, fifteen lousy thirty six to fifteen forty stupid six; screw De Freville's Petrel and Lollardy; most of all, screw insect assholes."

The structural parallels between *Mangrove Swamp* and its predecessor are not restricted to curtailed campers; both are disposed to veer off in metaphysical directions. *The Trap*, for all its bustling comedy, recalls a moment of stillness and mystery in Yeo's childhood when he stood with his uncle Hector among the earthworks at Silbury. The mood of *Mangrove Chronicle* darkens after the slaughter of a leatherback turtle that Yeo has watched laying her eggs, and by whose salty tears he is flummoxed. In accordance with local taboos against the killing of large chelonians, things, from that point on, go spectacularly wrong: tidal waves, hallucinations and even a murder ensue.

Mangrove Chronicle trails behind it a sense of missed opportunity. Treherne is too much the bobbyist, too relaxed, too ready to take the line of least resistance. Capable of great tact and real feeling where his interests and emotions are engaged, he slips away, when the going gets tough, into an undemanding comedy of manners. Much of this novel appears to have been written with one hand behind the author's back. If his next stretches him further, it will do him greater justice.

indulgence, and a none too successful one. The discussions between David and the Peans about art, though, have more specific purpose: they introduce the idea of words misleading. In art and in life, as is illustrated by the early talk between doctor and patient and the last, crucial phase of the treatment applied.

In the first case David recounts a school incident which could be seen as implying his underlying homosexuality; the authorial voice here makes it clear that Penn sees it as a pointer to the inversion he too readily suspects, while David regards the offering of facts which could be misconstrued as evidence of his trust in the doctor. The second scene between the two men occurs after Penn has discovered that David has cuckolded him. When the doctor disastrously forces David to confront his war memories it is impossible to say how much is down to error of judgment on Penn's part and how much to deliberate revenge.

The problem is that the war, vividly evoked by Burns, makes the personal drama banal by comparison; this is especially true of the relationship between David and Mary. The extension of war memories to Jack Brough and others dissipates the tension which should centre on David, class criticism is dragged in (the home only serves those who can afford it), and Jack's revenge and its aftermath bring us uncomfortably close to melodrama. Burns's use of "poetic" language is intended to represent David's sensitivity, but it is hard to warm to a novel which, describing the arrival of evening, refers to "a ride of darkness at the pull of a mordant moon".

Howling at the moon

Mansel Stimpson

RICHARD BURNS
A Dance for the Moon
173pp. Cape. £9.95.
0224023675

The opening of this novel, which has the central character, David, up on a roof-top, naked ("He was twenty-four years old. He had not been well since the war"), is strikingly successful. In a prologue of less than two pages, Richard Burns rivets attention; shows a keen sense of how to shape his material and communicates exactly the right degree of feeling. Alas, all that follows is a sad anti-climax, no less so because the author is trying to get to grips with major issues.

He has set his story in 1920 and his central concern is with men whose minds have been broken by the First World War and their own sense of guilt over their behaviour then. David Goodchild, a poet, is the main instance of this, but it is echoed in the derangement of a railwayman, Jack Brough, formerly a private, and in David's fellow patients who are being looked after near Sheffield. In charge is a psychiatrist, Dr Penn, who, though an American, served in the British army during the war and joined an MC. He has settled down with an English wife, Mary, thirteen years his junior.

The creation of poetic poems in the style of the "war poets" to represent David's work is an

Tucked up in verse

Lesley Chamberlain

D.M. THOMAS
Sphinx
248pp. Gullancz. £9.95.
0575036117.

The answer to the Sphinx's riddle lies in Pushkin's brief, unfinished *Egyptian Nights*, translated in D.M. Thomas's earlier novel *Ararat*. There the socially self-conscious poet Charsky confronts an impecunious second poet, who slings in turn of the reproachful voice obsessing him: "Why do you betray the Muse / By wandering aimlessly, my friend? / Before you reach the heights, you choose / To gaze beneath you and descend. / Blind to the great harmonious scheme / Of creation, you become possessed. / Too often, by some trivial theme, / And sterile fevers rack your breast." Charsky, equally struck by the *improvisatore's* brilliance and his anxiousness to make money, finds him a society patron and gives him a theme: Cleopatra's lovers...

There the elegant fragment ends, and Thomas takes over with a potentially infinite series of elaborations on the writing theme, all of which interlock and overlap like a Russian doll. Everything turns out to be the subject of yet another writer's improvisation. The structure and content of his *Ararat - Swallow - Sphinx* sequence, woven around an improvisation competition, may thus be said to come out of *Egyptian Nights*. It's like the business familiar to Russian scholars, surely including Thomas, about all Russian literature coming out of Gogol's *Overcoat*: not a matter of borrowing, but one of play.

Of Pushkin's rich fragment, every sentence has been bled for ideas about writing and being a poet. Pushkin generates thoughts about the poet's audience, his patronage, the social and political position of the artist in Russia, the necessity of being fashionable, the myth of inspiration, and the various "poetic" disguises of worldliness, frivolity, childishness, eccentric clothes and messy living. In *Sphinx* these themes are borrowed, repeated, reworked, intermarried and turned on their heads in Thomas's coarse weave of lives lived and scripturally revised in Andropov's Russia, Falklands year, 1982.

There are many slight presences in *Sphinx*, ranging from an American vodka salesman to a possibly paedophile Russian literary journalist, who seems to be an inversion of the Pushkin sentence which says that Charsky is irritated by little boys reading his verse aloud. All of them are hectoring translating or improvising, which in reality means they are either using words to set people up, for KGB or personal ends, or they are writing for *The Guardian*, or turning literary history into plays, or giving evidence in court, or just lying.

Apart from necessary transitions by taxi or train, only three things happen to them in

prose: sex, drinking and writing. But verse tucks them up after the hard day. Their comings and goings, ebbings and flowings are laid to rest in a now familiar Thomasian exercise in the *Oregon* stanza, in which he also sings Mrs Thatcher and retells the death of Pushkin, when the poet wanted to finish *Egyptian Nights*.

Willful diversion into the low and trivial, a painful eschewing of harmony, and the production of work without focus or shape, three common reviewers' caveats about Thomas, are accusations which have already been levelled at Pushkin's *improvisatore*. So what can be said? The critics are dragged in between Thomas's covers. They and their words are only more phenomena which at length he will frame and include in a sequence, while he and the *improvisatore* sing of freedom: "Because for wind, and eagle's claws, / And a girl's heart, there are no laws. / The poet too, like Aquilon, / Lifts what he wants, and bears it co - / Flies like an eagle, needs no voice / Directing him, spurns all control, / And claps the fold of his choice, / Like Desdemona, to his soul." Which is to say, I'll write what I like, and it will be good.

Thomas, having written himself into the authorial part of an inverted Little Jack Horner, cornered for having said a naughty word, begs for critical flagellation because it's generative. More words to frame, more writing, and possibly, *à la improvisatore*, more cash. He must know by now that his writing about sex is no good, viz that bodily emissions don't constitute character, and that copulation, however adroit, scheming or pious, is not the extent of the inner life. But he has his sordid, heist creations go on making such claims to point up their author's weakness. What are we to make of the aggressively working-class *Guardian* reporter in *Sphinx*, patently incredible as a journalist (he talks about scoops), who runs amok in Moscow with banal headline views on ILGA and racism and damp eyes for church-going Anna Kareninas?

Sphinx, described in the blurb as being about "the Cold War divisions of our world", latches on to the knee-jerk leanness of an inadequate man and then strays with adolescent offensiveness into politics. A KGB swallow, for instance, is meant to the Pope, approaches his closest adviser ("On Peter's rock, yes! / He lay on bar") and thus gets the Vatican to drop its support for Solidarity. In Thomas's apparently valueless creative world everything causes everything else; evaluations of politics and society are borrowed from newspapers and then undermined; no points in the narrative or the style are stable, still less aesthetically admirable. *Sphinx* ends with an evocation of love for freedom's sake which should make all serious readers, and the Kremlin, laugh.

Undaunted by the hostility he meets, Thomas continues with his homage to a great poet, and promises more. That obsession alone has weight.

Haunting stories

Roz Kaveney

LEIGH KENNEDY
Faces
152pp. Cape. £8.95.
0224028073

When ghosts stopped being the objects of superstitious terror they became literary properties, symbolic of an impotence, and regret that link oddly with their former status. Leigh Kennedy's short stories are not all tales of the supernatural; but their mood is precisely what would pertain if they were. Notably, in one story, "Max Haunting", she makes use of a standard ghost story trope, the person revisiting scenes from his life a decade earlier, only to play with our expectations by revealing that he is, as he seems, alive, and not the ghost that he should standarily discover himself to be. Kennedy is a little too slick in her use of the supernatural as a handy source of metaphors; at no point does she achieve genuine terror because we are too busy policing her skill and dexterity to be scared, or even much moved.

She is good on the wistfulness that is part of

the territory these stories explore. Generally her irony is also slick, perhaps a little too slick - a failed pianist-composer turned tuner plays for the old and rediscovers a lost artistry through his sudden new humility; in a cold and starving future, a young woman rejects the suitor she knows herself to be ruthless enough to eat in hard times. There is real feeling here, but when Kennedy touches raw nerves her control is less complete, and where she lacks control altogether, her stories are less satisfactory. "River Baby" tries to deal with Infanticide and that aspect of child abuse which is a transmitted deprivation; it does so through a mixture of realism and the supernatural, to relatively slight emotional or artistic effect - principally because the detachment which comes from pure making up is for so instant missing.

These are accomplished exercises, then, from a young writer who is putting herself through paces rather than taking risks. Playing around on the fringes of various genres is a smart and sensible way to do this; though her stories lack the commitment to the mild nuances of convention which might make them memorable rather than a pleasing box of samples.

Looking into the murky and murderous

James Campbell

P.D. JAMES
A Taste For Death
454pp. Faber. £9.95.
0581137997

"What I like is innocence", says the culprit, once cornered, in *A Taste For Death* - by which we understand, even if he himself doesn't, that he likes to corrupt innocence. It is a characteristic paradox. In P.D. James's novels, it is liable to be the hunger for a life free from responsibility - a kind of innocence, after all - which finally causes guilt; and it is the investigation of this guilt which demands a closer look inside the murky lives of associated "innocent" parties. Murder is a great destroyer of privacy, muses Commander Adam Dalgleish more than once in the course of his latest inquiry, during which he is bound to uncover quite a range of social vices, including the snobish, the sexual and the lethal.

The action of *A Taste For Death* takes place, for the most part, around the Notting Hill area - in particular at a desirable fictional address in Campden Hill Square - but at the beginning we are introduced to a Minister of State in the vestry of a Paddington church. His throat has been slit, and beside him lies a similarly mutilated tramp. Sir Paul Berowne had undergone a recent religious conversion and may even have exhibited the stigmata; the priest had granted him permission to sleep in the vestry. Harry Mack was a familiar local bun. Their grotesque partnership, however (and James has a nice line in corpse description: "everything human had drained away from them with their blood... they no longer looked like men"), is a mystery.

Dalgleish rounds up the usual suspects - that is, family, friends, lovers and (the least suspicious by far) enemies. In this case they are Berowne's wife, a beautiful, vain woman of a type James delights in exposing; her lover, a cold-blooded surgeon; Berowne's mistress, plain, sincere and well-suited to tragedy; the immature brother-in-law, a jealous failure; the daughter and her subversive boyfriend; relatives of two women close to Berowne who died recently in suspicious circumstances; and all the dailies and cleaning women, chauffeurs and church helpers who typically make up the supporting cast. More than one could have had a reason for doing it, all have solid alibis, and most have an air of not quite telling the truth. Moreover, there is an unconvincing desire among the family to have it wrapped up as a case of murder followed by suicide.

Dalgleish is too much a veteran to be thrown off the trail by such obstinacy. To investigate

the death of Sir Paul (not forgetting, as the family principals inevitably do, the tramp) he brings with him Massingham, who has a useful capacity to turn nasty with suspects, plus a new recruit to the squad, Inspector Kate Miskin - too pretty to be entirely reliable, too cold at the heart to fall in love with.

A Taste For Death resembles *Moby Dick* in that if your only interest is in the story you may as well flick from the first chapter to the last and find out who killed whom. The author's main concern is with what happens in between, where the society of the novel's inhabitants is dissected. Indeed, if there is a faint dissatisfaction at the close, it is only because the one thing which does not fit squarely into this comedy of manners is the deed that is the excuse for the making of it.

Admirers of Dalgleish will be pleased to learn that he is on stronger form than ever. He has not written a poem for four years, but he can still quote Crabbe over a corpse, pick up references to Plato in a dead man's letters, distinguish the good and bad in Lawrence and mutter a remark from Sartre. Cold fish though he is, he understands the irony of Berowne's death side by side with a tramp, which the family are incapable of doing. He has an insight into the dead man's spiritual crisis which Lady Berowne lacks (she, incidentally, gets her kicks by watching her surgeon lover "cut into another woman's body", taking her place in a line of Jamesian female perversities).

Is Dalgleish a man, or merely a representative of Justice in its ideal form? James avoids making him infallible by presenting him as an inadequate person, but his instincts as a detective are almost perfect. Although he experiences pity and fear, these emotions are subsumed by his desire for the good. His sympathy might be aroused by the plight of the defeated or the desperate, but it is his job to lock them up if they've done wrong.

The antics of Dalgleish apart, the best thing in *A Taste For Death* is the partnership with which the book opens, between dear, shy, old Miss Wharton, a church belp, and the mischievous, and in many ways unchildlike, ten-year-old Darren: "After the third visit he had, without an invitation, walked home with her and shared her tin of tomato soup and her fish fingers... he had become necessary to her." Other writers might have been tempted to build an entire novel around this recognizable pair; P.D. James can afford to spend them on a sub-plot.

She takes less trouble with those she dislikes. Sir Paul's mother, the dragonish Lady Ursula Berowne, is less a character than a mouthpiece for a set of unlikeable attributes of her class. This, like the upstairs-downstairs atmosphere, is a fault of the genre, whose conventions

James seems happy to obey, and of which she is one of the best living exponents. In earlier novels, such as *Cover Her Face* (1962), these conventions threatened to squeeze out her other talents, but here she has made room for them all while still writing what is basically a detective story. James often seems less interested in putting forward a convincing explanation of why one person should plot and carry out the killing of another than in dramatizing all the fuss surrounding it. Sometimes she is too fussy: in her long descriptions of

interiors, the studied backgrounds to minor characters' lives, where the background is adequately suggested by the character alone. The alternative view is that the seemingly endless flow of minor characters and sub-plots - Inspector Miskin's grumbling, dying grandmother, Berowne's daughter's involvement with a revolutionary movement, the affair between a member of the family and one of the staff - makes *A Taste For Death* an even more lavish entertainment than usual, and a more serious entertainment than most.

Criminal proceedings

T. J. Binyon

PETER WHALLEY
Robbers
223pp. Macmillan. £8.50.
0333 388224

Harry Sommers, ex-boxer, ex-minor villain, now running the Coronet Private Investigation Agency (Betlinal Green) after the death of his boss, is employed to find the person blackmailing the crooks when carried out a half-million pound wages snatch nine years ago. Neat, light and amusing: Peter Whalley could have the start of a good little series here.

DONALD THOMAS
The Ripper's Apprentice
245pp. Macmillan. £8.50.
0 333 40850 0

Belladonna, Donald Thomas's last novel, had the Reverend C. L. Dodgson as its central figure. *The Ripper's Apprentice* is based on the life of a much more unpleasant Victorian character: this time Inspector Swain is trying to find the man who is poisoning the prostitutes of Lambeth and sending taunting messages about his exploits to Scotland Yard. Original story, told in a highly individual manner, set in the gamey squalor of London in 1891.

W. J. BURLLEY
Wycliffe and the Quiet Virgin
191pp. Gollancz. £8.95.
0 375 03792 X

Chief Superintendent Wycliffe is spending Christmas with the Bishops, an old Cornish family with a house on top of a cliff near St Ives. Then a local girl vanishes, her mother is found dead, and Wycliffe's holiday becomes a murder investigation. Quiet, low-key narrative with solid Cornish background. Wycliffe has given up smoking, which may be why he's rather slower than usual in picking up some of the clues.

ARTHUR DOUGLAS
Last Rights
158pp. Macmillan. £7.95.
0 333 40765 2

Major Jonathan Craythorne is a tough soldier; not the kind of man, therefore, to stand around doing nothing after his sister has been blinded by using contact lens solution which has been contaminated as a protest against animal experiments. Easily digestible narrative with plenty of incident and some comedy. The author, who has done his homework, doesn't conceal his feelings: anti-vivisectionists and animal rights groups generally have a very rough ride.

JOHN MALCOLM
Whistler in the Dark
182pp. Collins. £7.95.
0 00 231492 4

Ex-rugby tough Tim Simpson, now head of the Art Investment Fund of White's Bank, and, after some ups and downs, living with his girlfriend, Sue Westernman of the Tate, gets wind of two hitherto unknown Whistlers. But, as usual when Tim tries to acquire something important for his fund, crime raises its ugly head and fur starts to fly. No less lively and exciting

than Tim's previous three adventures, with a great deal of interesting information on Whistler's family - he had more than a mother - and on his life in London.

STEPHEN DOBYNS
Saratoga Headhunter
208pp. Allison and Busby. £8.95.
0 85031 652 9

Charlie Bradshaw is the latest in the long line of integritious and impecunious private eyes who used to be policemen. He operates in the horse-racing town of Saratoga Springs, and in the time left over from driving a milk float - a job he has taken on as a favour to a friend who is allegedly tending a sick mother - he tries to find out who has nearly removed the head of ex-jockey Jimmy McClatchy as he sat at the dining-room table in Bradshaw's three-room cottage. Well-written, unassuming and pleasingly individual, *Saratoga Headhunter* is a definite find. Two more Charlie Bradshaw books have already appeared in America: one hopes they'll not take too long to get over here.

DOUGLAS CLARK
Storm Centre
205pp. Gollancz. £8.95.
0 375 03833 0

Delective Chief Superintendent Masters is still convalescing from the gunshot wound he received at the end of Douglas Clark's last novel when he's asked to stand in as temporary lecturer at a police staff college. He accepts, travels down with wife Wanda and child Michael, only to find that he's been had: they really want him to investigate a crime that appears to involve a senior foreign policeman who is attending a course at the college. Summoning DCI Green and Sergeants Reed and Berger, Masters puts them to work, and solves the problem, simultaneously enthralling the students with a series of brilliant impromptu lectures. Douglas Clark's books are becoming more and more quirky: the policemen ingurgitate massive quantities of food (mainly bread, cheese and pickles) and drink (mainly beer) while imparting recondite if irrelevant information to one another. But there's an odd charm about the books, and they're certainly habit-forming.

ALAN PLATER
The Belderbecke Types
202pp. Methuen. £9.95.
0 413 60330 X

Jill Swinburna and Trevor Chnplin, who teach English and woodwork respectively at a Leeds school jocularly but appropriately nicknamed San Quentin High, and who are tentatively trying out cohabitation, are accidentally given a tape, which instead of Bix's dulcet cornet, holds a sinister and topical discussion about the disposal of nuclear waste. Which explains why Jill and Trevor are shadowed wherever they go, why their house is searched, and why they have to flee from Rotterdam to Athens in the company of a coachload of geriatric Americans. Undoubtedly funny, with a number of really good laughs; but Alan Plater works too hard at his jokes and set pieces, and doesn't allow plot or character to develop. And there's something very worrying about Jill and Trevor's mother/child relationship.

Ambiguities of the image

Rudolf Arnheim

W. J. T. MITCHELL
Iconology: Image, text, ideology
226pp. University of Chicago Press. £16.95.
0226 532283

W. J. T. Mitchell, a literary critic, undertakes to explore the nature of images by comparing them with words or, more precisely, by looking at them from the viewpoint of verbal language. No pictures are discussed, and only one spokesman from the image camp, E. H. Gombrich, is admitted. The book is "about the things people say about images", and the author confesses to talking of vision the way a blind author would write for a blind reader. Add to this that he calls himself a conventionalist, a nominalist, and even an iconoclast, and you wonder whether you are being guided through the chicken-coop by a fox. Indeed, an anxiety about images is the prevailing mood of the book, and the theoretical discussion heats up to a battle between iconophobes and iconophiles.

Even so, this reader, a partisan of images, felt himself to be in good hands. Professor Mitchell offers the most lucid exposition of the subject I have ever read in a field in which one is more commonly dazzled by the display of peacock tails. No pertinent argument is left unmentioned. In reverse historical order the author singles out four theorists, Nelson Goodman, Gombrich, Lessing, and Edmund Burke, to discuss the structural differences between text and image, eye and ear, nature and convention, and space and time.

Especially valuable is Mitchell's effort to excavate the ideological foundations of these various concepts. Thus he handles the controversy stimulated by the work of Gombrich on whether there is an objective experience of nature and, correspondingly, a privileged position for realistic pictures, by offering a brilliant analysis of the particular historical conditions which bring about realistic art. He calls the realistic image predatory, associated with entrapment, illusion, and capture; it is "the figure

of production without labor, the unlimited consumption of reality, the fantasy of instantaneous, unmediated appropriation".

To be sure, realistic art may depend on a consumer mentality and still be derived from an objective apprehension of nature. The arguments against this latter assumption have shown a curious neglect of perception. Even theorists not brainwashed by Goodman's nihilism to the extent of accepting the absurd dogma that there can be no resemblance between the world and our images of it, may want to insist on the differences between the images of visual reality received by individuals and cultures. The theory of this imposition, however, tends to take the form of what one might call a Democratic atomism in reverse, by which con-

ventions, prejudices and preferences are unloaded on physical reality with little indication of how exactly this projection manifests itself in the actual images. Any such theory, it seems to me, should start from the basic fact that perception is not a passive recording of stimuli but an active grasping of structural properties. The difference between what is externally given and what is perceived precedes the more subjective factors cited by the relativists.

A similar neglect of perception accounts for Goodman's distinction, left uncriticized by Mitchell, between paintings as "densely ordered" and verbal language as discontinuous. To be sure, a light meter sliding across a canvas would record a continuum, but perception is something else. Perception yields

articulate structure if it is to make any sense. Conversely, if verbal language is understood by its perceptual referents rather than as physical clusters of letters on paper, its articulation loses much of its mechanical neatness.

Without due awareness of perception any discussion of imagery will go astray. So I cannot agree with Mitchell when he says that Lessing's distinction between the spatial art of painting and the temporal art of literature is misconceived because Lessing himself asserts that painting can express temporal action indirectly, by means of bodies, and poetry can represent bodily form indirectly, by means of actions. But the difference between direct and indirect presentation is by no means a matter of mere "convenience". The direct perceptual evidence of a work's spatiality or temporality is at the very core of the media, whose primary impact cannot be argued away by references to indirect presentation is by no means a matter of mere "convenience". The direct perceptual Lessing in the ranks of the iconophobes. He was concerned about the indiscriminate contamination of both media, and he restricted the borders of literature as severely as he did those of painting. Today's fear of images was not his problem.

Mitchell's most captivating achievement comes in his last chapter, where he analyses the use of the camera obscura as a metaphor for ideology in the writings of Karl Marx. From the beginning, the camera obscura "had a double reputation as both a scientific instrument and as a 'magic lantern' for the production of optical illusions". Accordingly Marx on the one hand used it to illustrate the direct grasp of objective reality required by the social critic; but he also saw it as a frivolous toy of shadowplay turning the world upside down, as do the ideologies Marx endeavored to unmask.

This ambiguity of the image is still with us. We may accuse it of a misleading arbitrariness, to justify our alienation from a reality we no longer trust. But unless we are willing to submerge in our private fantasies, we must be resigned to use the only window through which the world is open to us.



A drawing of Narcissus and Echo by Louis Fabritius du Bourg from an album of twenty-three scenes from Ovid, Divers Sujets des Métamorphoses d'Ovide, dessinés par Monsieur Le Brun, 1737. The album is to be sold at Christie's Great Rooms on Tuesday, July 1 and the drawing is reproduced from the sale catalogue. Among other items in this sale of Important Old Master Drawings are two sketches by Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo and studies by Rubens of a Roman statue of a comic actor.

Advances of a style

A. W. Johnston

DIETRICH von BOTHMER
The Amasis Painter and His World
246pp. Thames and Hudson. £35.
0500 234434

The one-man show is such a commonplace that the breakthrough represented by this catalogue may escape general recognition. For the first time we have had, at the County Museum, Los Angeles, an exhibition of Greek vases dedicated to the work of a single hand, the black-figure artist named the Amasis painter. Fittingly it opened first in New York on the centenary of the birth of Sir John Beazley, who was primarily responsible for attributing much of the *oeuvre*, now over 130 pieces, and for re-assembling a typically off-beat cup from fragments in the Vatican, the Ashmolean and Dorchester. His pupil, Dietrich von Bothmer, has written this exemplary catalogue, with an introduction to set the historical scene by Alan Boegehold of Brown University. Those works that could not be lent are also illustrated in the volume, together with many comparisons by contemporary artists.

Unlike the finest of his contemporaries, Exekias, the Amasis painter is not an innovator in the field of myth, though he does present some problems, notably with the occasional divine presence in a purely human scene. Yet he reflects the stylistic advances of the long period in which he worked, from the 530s BC down to perhaps the 510s. Bothmer gives no full treatment of his figure style, but it emerges clearly enough from the individual entries, and has already been treated by Beazley and Semol Karouzou. At the end of his career he comes under the influence of the first red-figure painters, notably in the pair of amphorae in Boston, though it may not be necessary to go as far as 435 and the work of Euphronios, as Bothmer suggests.

The exhibition includes several little-known

pieces, and others are noted in the catalogue. A fragmentary cup in the Getty Museum has one of the earliest signatures of Amasis; he always signs *apolese* (potted?), and the debate continues as to whether Amasis also painted these signed works; the precise nature of his contacts with Egypt, whence his name, is another contentious matter - certainly there is nothing Egyptian in the painter's style. The hand of the signatures seems unitary, but these include a few lekythos in the Getty whose figured decoration is certainly by a different hand. We can now add three signatures which show that the son of Amasis was none other than the leading potter of the next generation, Kleophrades. Amasis (or his painter) scribbled fairly actively on his pots, and one of the more delightful pieces in what is in any case a cheerful corpus of work, haunted by nymphs, satyrs and wine, is an unusual three-legged stand from the excavations in the sanctuary of Aphaia on the island of Aegina (the home of many of the "wholesale" distributors of Attic vases). This piece, on which Martha Ohly contributes a lively appendix, has, rather incongruously, tucked into the margin of a panel featuring the battle between Herakles and Kyknos, the line "The Sun and I alone know the boy is beautiful", a unique expansion of a common enough thought, and indeed one given pictorial expression on the adjoining leg of the pot; scarcely a relevant gift, one would have thought, for the goddess Aphaia, but relevance is one concept which has always taxed students of Greek vase-painting, and will continue to do so.

Perhaps there are points in the introduction with which the economic historian will take issue. Apart from a little modernistic terminology, the suggestion that some Athenian potters grew wealthy enough to dedicate marble statuary on the Akropolis is based on extremely thin evidence (and the captions to the relevant figures are somewhat mangled). The value of the book is more art-historical, a reliable and agreeable treatment of so imaginative a painter.

Genies of the flood

Kenneth Kitchen

JOHN BAINES
Fecundity Figures: Egyptian personification and the iconology of a genre
446pp. Warminster: Arts and Phillips. £32.
085668 0877

Among the innumerable deities and related figures to be found amid the often lavish decoration on temples and other monuments of Ancient Egypt, there occur numerous examples of the characteristic and unmistakable form studied by John Baines in this book. This is a male figure, often portly, with heavy breasts and stomach, personifying the material prosperity that derived from agriculture and pastoralism, supported by the Nile's enrichment and watering of Egypt's soil.

This dense, richly documented study falls into two parts. In the first part, the author is concerned with the theoretical groundwork for his detailed study. He discusses previous contributions on "personification" as a concept, then offers his own definitions. He distinguishes between "formal personifications" and "analytic" ones. The former are representations in human form whose names are non-personal substantives used elsewhere in the ancient Egyptian language. The latter are figures bearing the name of a normal Egyptian deity, but can be shown to personify a particular concept, or specific aspect of another entity. A further group is of emblematic personifications: hieroglyphs or other symbols endowed with human or animal limbs (or body) so that they may be depicted acting in an appropriate manner. Professor Baines rounds off this part of the book with a necessarily indecisive review of origins, but is able to date the emergence of three of his types of personification, before ending with an outline of the limits to personification, between mere metaphor on the one hand and major deities on the other.

The main bulk of the book then offers a survey of the iconography, modern terminology, ancient names, and functions and artistic contexts of these figures. Hitherto, these have been loosely termed "Nile-gods" or "Niles"; but this usage is inaccurate and a hangover from the pioneering epoch of Egyptology. Their chief name in Egyptian, *hapi*, means not the River Nile, but the annual Nile-flood or inundation; the old term "Nile-god" was in some measure inspired by unconscious misuse of misleading classical evidence.

Baines suggests instead the altogether more fitting term "fecundity-figures". This has the merit of focusing attention on the central concept that the figures typify - and of reducing their theological status from full-blown "gods" to supporting figures or genies, personifying the material richness made possible by the Nile. All this is gain; but it will doubtless be some time before handbooks and popular guidebooks can be induced to refer to fecundity-figures instead of the all too concise "Niles". There are two main contexts in which one may meet with these figures on monuments: leading (or forming) processions along the footings of temple-walls, bringing offerings to the king or for him to the gods; or in antithetical pairs on the sides of thrones or royal statues, binding the lotus and Papyrus of Upper and Lower Egypt around the *sma* symbol of "unloos", to epitomize the union of both Egypt's, south and north, under the pharaoh. These, and various other functions and contexts, receive full and detailed treatment from Baines.

The book is well printed and will undoubtedly become both a stimulus to thought and a valued work of reference for Egyptologists and historians of ancient art.

J. E. Manchip White's *Ancient Egypt: Its culture and history* (217pp. New York: Dover, distributed in the UK by Constable, Paperback, £4.45; 0 486 22548 8), first published in 1952, is now republished in unabridged form.

Arrivals and departures

Mark Girouard

JEFFREY RICHARDS and JOHN M. MACKENZIE
The Railway Station
440pp. Oxford University Press. £15.
019 2158767

Railway stations are curious places. They feature constantly in all our lives, and featured even more in those of people in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In those days not only did all classes of society pass in and out of them all the time, but so (if gauged as well as passenger stations are included) did pretty well everything that society needed, from newspapers to bananas. The glass and iron caverns, echoing marble halls and wild skylines of the great terminuses were the vestibules through which most people approached cities, just as they entered the countryside under the deliberately rustic gables and bargeboards of country stations. Whole armies left from railway stations for the front, excursion trains pulled out from them to explore the country or the world, the great and famous passed through them, dead or alive, to the accompaniment of brass bands and bunting. Stations in their great days epitomized nations. They were barometers of national taste, technology, class or race divisions and gastronomic capabilities, whether expressed in the desirable menus of French *Buffets Gare* or the stout and pork pies of English refreshment-rooms.

But it was nations on the wing that were epitomized. The dominant desire of most of those using railway stations was to get in and out of them as quickly as possible. They could be the scene of departures full of hope, for holidays or new careers, or of partings and meetings heavy with emotion; but on the whole they were experienced in the curious, if by no means unpleasant, state of suspended animation which anesthetizes travel for most people. Writers and film directors have found railways and railway stations useful tools for making people of different backgrounds interact, but in fact, in spite of the extraordinary mixture of people who used and use them, such interactions seldom take place. They dug much less deeply into people's lives than other nineteenth-century building types, such as churches, hotels, department stores, theatres and opera-houses.

Grand though the architecture of stations could be, a site next to a station was seldom considered a good address. Cities swelled in size and wealth as a result of the railways, but the stations themselves were seldom built in town or city centres, and usually failed to attract these centres towards them. In big cities

the typical station sub-world consisted of cheap hotels, boarding-houses, brothels and seedy bars; and in smaller English towns visitors had to run the gauntlet of red-brick villas and terraces of Station Road, before they reached what one tends to think of as the "real" town.

Many books have been written about railway architecture. Jeffrey Richards and John M. Mackenzie have set out to take a wider look at the station and to examine "not only its architecture, but also its role in the arts, society, politics and warfare". They discuss the economic function of railway stations, the communities of railway workers who ran them, the way in which they have been used for advertisement or propaganda purposes and the role they have played in wartime. They look at station police and station criminals, and at important station elements such as booking offices, bookstalls, refreshment-rooms and telegraph offices. They examine goods stations as well as passenger stations of all types. They discuss stations as they have featured in poems, novels, pictures and films. Their text is full of good quotations, and they write with the infectious enthusiasm of addicts, captivated by the romance of railways and indignant at the way in which they have been run down in the post-war decades.

The book contains much curious or entertaining information. The table of the Maharaja of Gwalior, it appears, "was adorned with a silver centre-piece, in effect a classical station adorned with statuary and urns, from which there emerged a silver model of a train which circulated liqueurs and cigars". Russian railways had five classes, as opposed to the three of western Europe. Some early Indian stations were fortified, with corner towers and firing slits. The station at Milan ran an umbrella-hire service. At Hawkesbury, near Bristol, the bell to mark the approach of trains was rung by the station-master's fox-terrier, George Arliss, the film star, once booked himself into the luggage office at Charing Cross Station, in order to escape from his fans.

The Railway Station is more than a collection of agreeable anecdotes, however; it is a full and serious survey. Indeed, problems arise out of the fact that it covers so many topics. Arguably, it does not distinguish enough between what is relevant to a social history of railways, and what to one of railway stations. The two are so clearly intertwined that a degree of overlap is inevitable, but there are times when the reader gets rather more purely railway history than is necessary; railway towns, for instance, on which there is a short section, were a product of railway works, rather than railway stations.

The book suffers from the publisher's deci-

sion to treat it as social history, and to limit its illustrations to forty-five. The sections on stations of mainly illustrated buildings become affected as a result. Nearly a quarter of the book is given over to a round-the-world survey of station architecture, with particular emphasis on countries which have previously received little coverage, especially India, Australia and the countries of South America. The survey is written with verve but the descriptions of mainly illustrated buildings become monotonous and at times frustrating; it is arguable that, in view of the constraints, it would have been better to have reduced this section and given more space to other aspects. The book would have had more weight if it had included some detailed case-studies, such as gave such interest to J. R. Keblet's *Railways and Victorian Cities*. There is little back-up to the authors' statement that country stations in North America and the British Isles functioned as social centres. The influence of city terminuses on their surroundings is dealt with in a couple of paragraphs. The authors comment on the fact that, unlike most city stations, Grand Central Station in New York and Cen-

tral Station in Tokyo have created city-centres around them, with a resulting crop of skyscrapers, but make no attempt to explain the reasons for this.

It would have been interesting to have had more quotations from people who disliked stations. Ruskin thought that "the rush of the arrival in the railway station" had destroyed the pleasures of travel. One suspects that the kind of reservations which many people have about air travel today were felt about rail travel in the nineteenth century. In a hundred years' time will airports have replaced stations as objects of romantic nostalgia? They will have at least two factors to contend with. Owing to the ambience of air travel they are even more cut off from the everyday life of towns and cities than railway stations. And as yet remarkably few airports have managed to find an architectural form which adds excitement, enjoyment and drama to travel. Apart from Charles de Gaulle and Dulles airports, what is there to set against the array of magnificent sheds and halls, or fantastic railway palaces, analysed with affection and understanding in *The Railway Station*?

Do-go areas

Andor Gomme

C. E. B. BRETT
Buildings of Belfast
Second edition
86pp, with 72 plates. Belfast: Frinr's Bush Press. £12.95.
0946872023

Twenty years ago C. E. B. Brett puzzled some of his fellow-citizens and surprised outsiders by suggesting that Belfast was a city worth visiting for its architecture - "very individual... with a pronounced character all its own". His book went quickly out of print, and through a good deal of subsequent work - not only by Mr Brett himself, but very much of it sponsored by the Ulster Architectural Heritage Society, of which he has long been the tireless chairman or president - has confirmed the interest of the subject and filled in much detail. *Buildings of Belfast* has not been superseded as a concise historical guide. Its reappearance, in this revised second edition, is very welcome.

It is a pity, though, that - presumably on grounds of economy - the only amendments allowed come in a few captions and a series of pity footnotes which do no more than correct errors in the text and give up-to-date information on the fate of buildings discussed. Neither here nor in the lengthy new introduction does Brett add to his survey, even though by his own

account there are numbers of items that he feels should now be included; main text and illustrations remain unchanged from the first edition. Since, however, Alistair Rowan's *Buildings of Ireland* may be some time in reaching Belfast and the UAHs has only surveyed small areas of the city, there should have been a gazetteer, keyed in to a modern map, and a fuller bibliography.

Brett reports that "a surprising number of the best buildings recorded in 1966 are still there". Perhaps it's surprising that any are: his footnotes all too often tell the same story - "bombed", "vandalized", "demolished"; the words are on every page. To an outsider dulled by the repeated stories of terrorist explosions, the most sobering discovery is of how much of the destruction of historic buildings has been planned or approved by the city itself, with the result, among other things, that virtually all of Georgian Belfast has now been destroyed. It is a familiar story; what is different is that conservation has still hardly been heard of in Northern Ireland, and Belfast is going on with the wholesale process which caused such havoc in Bristol, Newcastle, Glasgow, Leeds... but seems in these other cities to have now been abandoned - at least as a principle of municipal planning. Happily even Belfast has an occasional three-star restoration for Mr Brett to report: his new edition may be just in time to forestall the final obliteration of that individuality which was still so evident in 1966.

London influences

John Harris

EDWARD HUBBARD
Clwyd
518pp. Viking. £16.95.
0147010323

The county of Clwyd is one of those political aberrations of local government reorganization in 1974; this new addition to The Buildings of Wales series retains the division into the two historic counties of Denbighshire and Flintshire. To the south are the counties of Montgomeryshire, Radnorshire and Breconshire, described in Richard Haslam's *Powys* volume in 1979. When The Buildings of Wales is completed in four more volumes the revelation of unknown architecture will still for ever the comment that Wild Wales has not much to offer.

If Clwyd itself has no great cathedral - it has only the emotive ruins of Valle Crucis abbey - and no great medieval castles, it has to compensation an uncommon variety of building and much glorious scenery, with the added bonus of seascapes and seaside towns such as Colwyn Bay. As Edward Hubbard's selection of illustrations immediately reveals, the county has an abundance of architectural riches, among them the great if little-known New-

bridge Lodge of 1827 at Wynnystay by C. R. Cockerell, worthy of Ledoux's Paris gates; the tremendous ironwork screen at Leeswood Hall of c1726; and, perhaps more familiar, W. Eden Nesfield's Golden Lodge at Kinnel Park of 1868. A glance at the map will reveal why there is such high quality, for these counties march with Cheshire and Shropshire. They are Welsh, but London influences were never far away, though these naturally weakened as we progress into the more remote parts of Wales.

There is a pronounced difference between this volume and the present reviewer's *Lincs-shire*, published in 1964 after five years of preparation. In the quarter of a century that divides the two, modern architectural history, and in particular topographical description and enquiry, have been altered and enriched, so that, for example, Hubbard avocatively describes Emral Hall in order to establish a context for the remaining outbuildings; or comments upon the style of the Wyatt-esque Gresford Lodge. Yet the one was demolished in 1936, and the other in the 1950s. Haslam's *Powys* was even bolder enough to illustrate London's Garth, demolished in 1946. In contrast to these newcomers to architectural history, Pevsner hated describing anything that was not there.

In the account of Chirk Castle, change is also apparent in the very just balance struck be-

tween describing the pre-1700 work and the later contributions of Pugio and Crace, Sir Arthur Blomfield, and Lord Howard de Walden's architects, Ingram and Brown after 1911. Hubbard pays great attention to the architecture of the period 1880 to 1920, and all this is a reminder of the broadening of our interests. Elsewhere there is ample evidence for a curiosity to landed families. (Pevsner would describe quite large houses without ever mentioning who they were built for.) Two houses outside Mold are very special: Rhul, built in 1634 for Evan Edward, whose forebears went back beyond recorded history, and whose descendants are still there; and Gwysaney of 1603, owned by the Davies-Cooke family. Yet in both cases there are surprising links with sophisticated London. Stephen Switzer was advising on the gardens of Rhul in 1739; and at Gwysaney, because the family married into the Sykoses of Sledmere, J. L. Pevsner enlarged the house in 1863.

The mention of Switzer suggests another new influence in these post-Pevsner volumes: the growth of garden history. Hubbard tells us much, and performs a great service in marshalling the facts about the huge garden and park works at Wynnystay; though we still need to know more about the gardens of Llaneddyrn Hall, with extensive remains of a distinguished terraced and parterre layout;

Switzer's remarkable garden surviving at Leeswood Hall is the subject of a report (which I suspect Hubbard has not read) by David Jacques. Leeswood stays in the memory for the glorious White Gates of 1726, probably by Robert Bakewell. In the pattern and intricacy of their wrought ironwork we see classicizing influences which contrast with the baroque style of the great gates at Chirk Castle, made by the Davies Brothers from 1712. As the original position of these gates seems subject to some dispute, it is worth pointing out that they are clearly shown dividing the parterre on the north front of the castle into two in Peter Tillemans's painting dated 1720 or 1726. Incidentally, although the "prodigious GARDENS" of c1660 at Llanerch have given way to landscape, their ghostly skeleton is still beneath the grass.

Hubbard is a historian whose specialty is Victorian and Edwardian architecture. He has long been a distinguished activist in the Victorian Society, and his scholarship shines forth in this volume. For instance in his account of Nesfield's Kinnel Park, and of Bodrhyddan. Both houses are work of London quality, and Kinnel is of European significance. Hubbard also devotes two-and-a-half pages to the astonishing Gwrch Castle, surely one of the most amazing of all early Victorian castles, spread theatrically across its hillside like a gigantic folly.

Paid on all sides

Donal B. Cruise O'Brien

NICHOLAS HARMAN
Bwana Stokes and his African Conquests
340pp. Cape. £12.95.
0 224 01908 8

Charles Stokes (1852-94), an Irish adventurer in Africa at the time of the Scramble, is given greater honour in *Bwana Stokes and his African Conquests* than ever he received from white men in his lifetime. In Africa from 1878 onwards, initially as a lay missionary with the Church Missionary Society in Buganda, he aroused European censure as he fitted comfortably into an African style of life. Dressed in a long Arab robe, surrounded by African retainers and collaborators, he ended his missionary career with his (second) marriage to a pagan African woman. His wife Limi appears to have been devoted to him until his death despite his notorious infidelities, and their daughter was the object of proper paternal devotion. All of this amounted to a "lowering of standards" in European eyes, but to Stokes himself it was a happy family life.

"Retired to trade" as a result of his unacceptable marriage, Stokes became a particularly effective organizer of long-distance overland commerce, from the East African coast to the kingdom of Buganda. Ivory was the export commodity, carried to the coast in columns of more than a thousand men, and it was paid for in barter with European guns. The Kahaka of Buganda needed guns, among other reasons to fend off the encroaching white men, so that the terms of Stokes's exchange were bound to fuel criticism of him from the coast.

Family life and commerce were for a time happily combined, as Stokes had an entrée to African society through his wife's relations; in his defiant words she was "a person of position in her own part of the country", related to the chiefs of the Wanyamasi. These were the people who supplied the porters for Stokes's caravans; with their help his business prospered, as he became "the most experienced of the East African safari leaders". The doom of this trade, and of Stokes, came with the imposition of European government in Africa.

The drawing of arbitrary frontiers across the African landscape, with customs posts and bureaucracy soon to follow, was bound to be very bad news for a businessman-adventurer like Stokes. The rapacity and arrogance of the European conquest of Africa are well known, and Nicholas Harman wisely does not linger on them. European greed was also commonly based on a misapprehension as to Africa's resources. The Marquess of Salisbury and Prince Otto von Bismarck might share an aristocratic

scepticism about the value of the colonial enterprise, but the pressure of mass opinion was too strong. In Bismarck's words (1884), "This whole colonies business is completely bogus, but we need to win the elections." It is hard to find a neater encapsulation of the relation between imperialism and mass democracy.

The makers of European conquest whose paths crossed with Stokes's evasive trajectories included dangerous men indeed. Stokes is identified as "fitting posthumously, obscure and unnamed, across the nightmare landscape of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*". Cameo portraits of some of the conquerors are included: notably of the "cranky" Captain Lugard, with his "special talents for public relations and violence"; and of Dr Carl Peters, propagandist of racism in Germany. Lugard and Peters were representatives of the two great powers of the period; in dealing with such men, poor Stokes was getting dangerously out of his depth.

Pacific overtures

Kaori O'Connor

PAUL DE DECKKER (Editor)
The Aggressions of the French in Tahiti and Other Islands of the Pacific by George Pritchard Her Britannic Majesty's Consul 1837-1844
253pp. Oxford University Press. £35.
0 196 47994 0

George Pritchard was a colourful character who might have stepped straight from the pages of Herman Melville's *Typee* or *Mooe*. He was the kind of man Melville loved to hate, a missionary-politician who had come to the Pacific islands to do good, and had ended by doing well. Within twelve years of arriving in Papeete as a minister of the London Missionary Society, Pritchard had established himself as a leading merchant of the town, had been appointed British Consul and had become the confident, political adviser and spiritual mentor of the young Queen of Tahiti, Pomare IV. He was himself responsible for first drawing the unwelcome attentions of the French to Tahiti - at a time when France and England were contesting for mastery of the Pacific - through his ill-judged advice to the Queen to expel two Roman Catholic priests from the islands in 1837; and his subsequent actions led certain of his contemporaries and some modern historians to hold him to blame for delivering the islands into the hands of the enemy. But Pritchard has had as many partisans as critics.

and would thus transgress a basic constitutional principle. Kitchener, for his part, thought that "dual control" of the army hampered the C-in-C's capacity to wield it into an effective fighting machine. Both entrenched themselves in their positions.

But the fascination of the quarrel lies not in its substance but in the personality of the two men and the means that they employed to achieve their ends. Curzon - the aloof aristocrat - was, in fact, a reforming and progressive administrator. His fatal shortcoming was that he antagonized so many of those whose support might have helped him in his trial of strength with the C-in-C: the maharajas resented his lecturing them on the amount of time that they spent at the races or at Monte Carlo; the government officials resented his insistence that they should wear knee-breeches at functions and "not take refuge in the irregular trouser"; the well-connected officers of the 9th Lancers resented his exemplary punishment of their whole regiment because they had failed to bring the murderers of two Indians to justice; the University resented his implying in a speech to its members that the ideal of truth was a Western conception; the press resented his refusal to talk to them; and - above all - the Cabinet in London resented his stubbornness. When the showdown came, despite the honourable nature of his conduct, there were too few who were prepared to do battle for him.

Stokes, being a businessman, saw no reason not to offer his services to several clients at once: if the customers should be bitterly at odds, this was not really his affair. Thus at the same time he was collecting chiefs' signatures for the "treaties" of both the German and the British governments, while also buying and transporting guns for Kabaka Mwanga - a mao bent on resisting both these European incursions in their "evangelical" claims on his kingdom, who knew the white men to be "well-armed liars" and needed at least to be armed against them.

His business career probably could not have long survived the pressures of such politics, but the circumstances of Stokes's death were ugly and fortuitous - he was lynched on the orders of a drunken Belgian officer in the sinister Semliki valley, a no man's land where there were elephants still in large numbers, and the meeting-place of the rival territorial ambitions of Germany, Belgium and Britain. Stokes had

He was clearly a man of exceptional abilities, and remains one of the most interesting and controversial figures in the Tahitian imbroglio. *The Aggressions of the French in Tahiti and Other Islands of the Pacific* is an edition of a recently discovered manuscript, written on the high seas after Pritchard's summary expulsion from Tahiti by the French in 1844, and one turns to it with expectations of new and detailed revelations, personal insights, even of a cracking good yarn.

The book sadly proves a disappointment in every respect. Had it been published on his return to England as Pritchard hoped, it would have appeared as a political pamphlet, for it is a polemic rather than a narrative personal account of his adventures, and is delivered very much in the manner of a sermon. Pritchard's purpose in writing it was to offer the British public a summary account of events in Tahiti that led up to and followed the proclamation of a French protectorate there in 1842, to defend his own actions and those of British missionaries and naval officers, but above all to arouse general sympathy for Queen Pomare in hopes that a public outcry would impel the Foreign Office to take steps to disestablish the new provisional government. Pritchard puts his case persuasively, but sticks doggedly to generalities. As he presents them, events in Tahiti are little more than the familiar fixture of England v France, Protestantism v Catholicism, played out beneath the palm-trees. The indigenous culture of Tahiti and the complexities of its recent history intrude not at all, and although his account is highly partisan it is also

In contrast, there was nothing honourable about the conduct of Kitchener. King enumerates his lobbying, his lies and his distortions, and relates that while Kitchener resorted to codes and private networks to get his slanders on Curzon back to London, Curzon - when offered a sight of the incriminating correspondence - declined to read another man's letters. So not only did Curzon's fallings contribute to his fall, his virtues did too; the tragedy which in 1905 brought Curzon home to the political wilderness, while leaving Kitchener in command in India, was as inevitable as it was complete.

King is justifiably hard on Kitchener. He has used new evidence, particularly Kitchener's correspondence with Mariner (his "spy" in London), to show up the former's scheming nature in sharper silhouette than has been done previously. Only when the author attempts to attribute the fiasco of the Mesopotamian campaign of 1915-16 to Kitchener's maladministration in India a decade before, does he somewhat overreach himself; the external eventually for which Kitchener was preparing his army was invasion from the north by Russia, not intervention in the Middle East against Turkey. But this is a good tale well told; it deserves to be read by those many who have a general interest in India and in the heyday of empire, as well as by students of the machinations of imperial government.

hoped that this would be his last expedition, after which he could return to Ireland and set up his family in style. Instead, his ivory was stolen, his agent killed and eaten by African raiders, and then he was hanged from a tree by the Belgians (in a Foreign Office minute, "for all the world as if he were a native").

Nobody is likely to put up a statue to Stokes, and his ghost might well be pleased with this biography: though the title is unnecessarily coy, and some reflections on the frontiers of Africa are dispensable - such as, "Europe's needless strength was the father of Africa's present weakness". But it is a story well told, and well worth telling: an imaginative choice of subject has been richly rewarded; and the task does indeed bear on much later developments: there must be many a long-distance trader (perhaps operating through the pious annual pilgrimage to Mecca, forging travel documents and bribing customs agents) who would recognize a cousin in Charles Stokes.

strangely impersonal: we learn nothing of Pritchard the man. Although the text has never been published before in its entirety, parts were used by Pritchard's son William in his own reminiscences, the documents cited have appeared elsewhere and the events described are recounted more fully in other contemporary sources. Whatever their pedigree, not all long-lost manuscripts merit publication outside the scholarly journals and, given its shortcomings, Pritchard's was at best a borderline case.

Paul De Deckker has supplemented the manuscript with his own detailed footnotes, with the declared aim of supplying an objectivity that the text lacks. His research has been extensive, and the background information he provides fleshes out the bare bones of Pritchard's account substantially. Objectivity, however, is another matter. De Deckker himself discovered the Pritchard manuscript while researching for his yet-unpublished biography of the Belgian adventurer Jacques-Antoine Moerenhout, who was French Consul at Tahiti and did much to facilitate France's forcible annexation of the islands. Pritchard and Moerenhout were bitter enemies, and what ended as a confrontation of nations began as a violent clash of personalities. Perhaps unconsciously, De Deckker very much takes Moerenhout's side, and although he begins by struggling to remain impartial, he ends by arguing Moerenhout's case against Pritchard and France's case against England. Inevitably, the factual value of the footnotes suffers as De Deckker succumbs to his personal bias, which so overwhelms him that he concludes the book with an epilogue which omits the fact - essential to an objective assessment of Pritchard - that his expulsion from Tahiti caused an outcry in the House of Commons, and brought England and France to the brink of war. By the end, one has learnt much about Moerenhout but remains little the wiser about Pritchard.

This is a well-designed and handsomely produced book, with footnotes placed helpfully at the bottom of the relevant pages. There is an extensive bibliography that is particularly good on French sources, and the text is enlivened with excellent illustrations, including several by Moerenhout. If the definitive, balanced study of George Pritchard in Tahiti has yet to be written, *The Aggressions of the French in Tahiti* is still a stimulating and useful contribution to the field, and one whose relevance is not confined to the past. A striking aspect of the Tahitian affair is the curious behaviour of both English and French naval officers who, on arriving in the islands, threw their trailing trade winds and began to disregard their orders, to exceed their authority, to conduct personal feelings with foreign policy and generally to act in a high-handed manner. De Deckker calls this the "sea change" and sees it as an exclusively nineteenth-century phenomenon, explained by the heady effect the Pacific had on Europeans, who, liberated from their own social context and treated by the islanders as superior beings, began to behave like conquerors. In view of twentieth-century nuclear activities in the Pacific, one reflects sadly that nothing much has changed.

In search of social security

David Cannadine

J. M. BOURNE
Patronage and Society in Nineteenth-Century England
198pp. Arnold. £28.
0 7131 6484 0

The kiss of death for any historical subject is to describe it as an important but neglected topic, since the second adjective so devastatingly belies the first. Yet in the case of the history of patronage, this description is entirely apt. For patronage is like sex: it has always been with us, and it makes the world go round; but it is not spoken of in polite and self-aware society; and it is most fittingly practised between consenting adults in private.

But while the history of sex has come out and taken off, the history of patronage still lingers coyly in the closet. Indeed, until very recently, it was generally supposed that it had ceased to be a subject of historical significance in Britain some time in the early nineteenth century. England may have been riddled with jobbery and corruption from Thomas Cromwell to the Hanoverians, but thereafter - so the argument ran - it was gradually but inexorably reformed away in the aftermath of the Industrial Revolution and the extension of the franchise, and a new meritocracy was ushered in, which reached its apogee with the triumph of such compulsive competitors and self-made paragons as Wilson, Heath and Thatcher.

Yet as J. M. Bourne points out in the conclusion to his pioneering, important and excellently written book, this view now seems too cosy to convince. For as the Butskellite Welfare State recedes into historical perspective, it no longer looks quite so virtuous and disinterested as it once did. Instead of appearing as the summation of rationality, improvement and meritocracy, its nationalized industries, its royal commissions and its honours lists now seem more like a new edition of Old Corruption. In the 1960s, even a junior minister disposed of more patronage than Sir Robert Wal-

pole in his prime. In the age of Dr Beeching, the heavy trains still ran on time and in abundance.

Indeed, one reason why government patronage was resuscitated so easily in the aftermath of the Second World War was that it had never really died. Of course it is true, as Bourne points out in the first part of his book, that the political patronage of the crown was diminished, and that the number of parliamentary placemen and sinecure holders was much reduced, between the 1780s and the 1830s. But this was offset by the massive increase in the number of salaried government officials employed, which more than trebled from the 1780s to the 1880s, some in the armed services, some in imperial administration, and many as Benthamite bureaucrats. And for most of the century, most of these officials were appointed by patronage and recruited from a limited social group: such measures as the Northcott-Trevelyan reforms, the abolition of purchase in the army, and the advent of open competition, were delayed in their impact and limited in their results.

All this is well enough known. As is the fact that most of the people who dispensed the

patronage - whether as private persons or as public office holders - came from the upper classes, augmented by those captains of industry with large labour forces, and Queen Victoria herself, whose jealousy of military and ecclesiastical patronage was proverbial. More originally, Bourne contends that the main beneficiaries of this system were not - as is commonly supposed - the aristocracy and the gentry, but that large, non-industrial segment of the middle classes that inhabited so much of London, the provincial spas like Bath and Brighton, and the Trollopian world of the cathedral close. In the uncertain circumstances of the time, when bereavement and bankruptcy were real and dire dangers, they saw in government employment the one sure way of obtaining security commensurate with their status.

In his final section, Bourne considers this patronage system in the broader context of nineteenth-century British society, and here again, his conclusions are novel. He points out how the middle classes were divided: between the non-industrial beneficiaries of patronage, and the provincial, entrepreneurial opponents of the system, who saw it as the negation of

self-help. He shows how patronage was utilized by political leaders to stabilize party affiliation in the Commons, and to assimilate and reward constituency associations. Above all, he argues that patronage provided a remarkably efficient system of recruitment and administration: it allowed for talent-spotting and for head-hunting; it brought in new men in a way not achieved again until the Second World War; and the efficiency and competence of the armed services and the home and overseas administration were much greater than is usually allowed.

In short, considering the limited institutional means available for identifying and recruiting the personnel of government for most of the nineteenth century, it is Bourne's contention that the patronage system was not only entirely appropriate, but was also arguably the best possible in that small-scale, face-to-face, pre-industrial society which so much of Britain remained until the late 1870s. And, significantly, when this intimate world broke down, the system adjusted very rapidly and very efficiently, with the new public schools, the reformed universities and open competition perpetuating the ethos of the old system in the changed conditions of a mass society, a collectivist state, and a world-wide empire.

This is not once a slim yet seminal work, which brings together a great deal of secondary material, but presents it in a new and highly original way. Inevitably, there are gaps. There is very little on the Celtic fringe, and no real explanation of how government patronage helped to assimilate the élites of Ireland, Scotland and Wales into a Greater Britain. In concentrating so much on the middle classes, Bourne gives insufficient attention to the petty bourgeois shopocracy of the provincial towns, who sought minor jobs in local government, the customs and excise, the post office and the dockyards. And we do not hear enough about the aristocracy, especially in the later part of the nineteenth century, when they queued for government offices to augment their dwindling rentals. Like all stimulating books, this makes us want to know more. In the language of the subject, it is a very good job indeed.



"The Gate of the Old English Gentleman" by Robert Seymour; reproduced from the section "Christmas" in *The Customs and Ceremonies of Britain: An Encyclopedia of Living Traditions* by Charles Knight (248pp. Thomas and Hudson. £12.50. 0 500 25096 0).

The rise of politeness

Mark Goldie

J. G. A. POCCOCK
Virtue, Commerce, and History: Essays on political thought and history, chiefly in the eighteenth century
321pp. Cambridge University Press. £25 (paperback, £7.95).
0 521 25701 8

This collection of essays provides a cadenza to J. G. A. Pocock's grand theme of the past twenty years. Where earlier historians took jurisprudence to be at the heart of the history of political theory, he has resolutely focused our attention upon a quite other, but no less pervasive, language of politics, that of civic humanism or classical republicanism. In his story it is the vocabulary of civility, virtue, corruption, self-rule and the *res publica*, rather than that of law, rights, nature, contract and sovereignty, that takes precedence. And whereas it was the Roman lawyers and the canonists who were the preceptors of the jurisprudential tradition, it was Cicero, Plutarch and Polybius who inspired the Whig revival of the Ancient polis. For a century and a half after the Civil War it was the idyll of the Roman gentleman that governed political imagination, a man whose landed economic independence guaranteed his incorruptibility and whose right to bear arms was his cyberspace of citizenship. The talk of the coffee-houses was of Cincinnatus and Scipio, Cato and Cato, and Sir Robert Walpole's most challenging task was to lure into the Cabinet that recalcitrant backbencher Tacitus, the model of country virtues.

To discover our forebears engaged in a hitherto unsuspected conversation is a remarkable case of how constrained perceptions of past texts can be. No less remarkable is the injury done to our conception of what the canonical texts are. The keystones of the

Pocockian canon are the Machiavelli of the *Discourses* and the *Oceano* of James Harrington. The Machiavelli of the *Prince* is now almost marginalized, while Locke, once presumed the presiding genius of eighteenth-century British thought, is, in Pocock's words, "at present moving along a remote orbit". Indeed a peculiar thing about the Antique idiom, and a crucial reason for its former invisibility, is that the British greats were either tangential to, or sceptical about, that idiom. The ruthless juridical Hobbes "talks past" the humanist Harrington, while Hume and Adam Smith were critics of the flaccid sentimentality of "Country" political journalism. The long love-affair with Roman virtue was finally and rapidly killed off by borrow at the toga'd despotism of the French Revolution, and by Bentham's and Ricardo's complete abandonment of humanist vocabularies.

Some will wonder whether the civic humanist theme threatens to become too voracious. It is now de rigueur for students to hook into it every passing author. There are costs. Pocock's exclusive concentration on Whiggism after Harrington occludes the tough, absolutist Tory jurisprudence of the Restoration and after: not all Hanoverian Tories were Bolingbroke republicans. The natural law tradition, with its admiration for Grotius and Pufendorf, richly developing from Gershom Carmichael to Smith, falls from sight. Augustanism - the Imperial theme in its classical (often Horatian) guise - disappears, because political classicism is equated with republicanism. The rivalries of Platonism, scholasticism and Goliardism are neglected.

None the less, I don't believe the Pocockian sagas has yet exhausted its fruitfulness. For some time scholars have explored the constitutionalist legacies of the ancients: the doctrine of the harmonious triadic balance of monarchy, aristocracy and democracy, and the debates about militias and standing armies. One can detect now a turn of scholarship towards the ethos of classicism, "Spirit", "politeness",

"conversation", "manners", the antinomy of virtue and corruption, the intimate fabric of civility, and its largely Stoic inspiration - It is this "politics of culture" which we shall hear about in the coming years, from students of both Renaissance and Enlightenment humanism. Cicero's *De Officiis* and Seneca's *De Beneficiis* will turn out to have been key texts. These themes will bring the older canon back from its distant orbit. Pufendorf, although conventionally assigned to the natural law tradition, integrated Stoic ethics into his jurisprudence and began to elaborate a conjectural history of sociality. Locke, famous for a work of jurisprudence, hoped to build a Stoic moral theory, and earnestly recommended Pufendorf and *De Officiis*. His pupil, the third Earl of Shaftesbury, became "the Whig Erasmus" and the Whig Montaigne". These themes also allow connection with the Enlightenment's investigation of the origins of language, and its sensitivity to that paradigm case of relations which may be civil or corrupt, the conversation of the sexes. In Naples the republican polemicist Paolo Doria attacked Habsburg imperialism by showing, *inter alia*, that the barbarous ethic of *machismo* had displaced the civil conversation of the sexes.

Much of this will be done by others: Pocock, with his characteristically synoptic eye for the scholarly landscape, charts some of these possibilities, but his own chief concern here is with Whig conceptualizations of commerce and property. He becomes polemical when he berates Marxists, romantic Tories, and economic libertarians for having reduced seventeenth and eighteenth-century political thought to a one-dimensional story of the rise of economic man, "possessive individualism" and "market ideology". In *Capital* Marx identified political economy too much with Ricardo's diametric science rather than with the humanism of the Scottish Enlightenment. Conservatives like Coleridge convicted the Whig oligarchy of screwing down upon Britain the dehumanized utilitarian commercialism they thought they

saw in Bacon and Locke. Modern scholars, the argument goes, are consequently oblivious to the complex Hanoverian debate about commerce, and to the sheer embarrassment it evinced concerning the moral damage done by the rise of mobile wealth and public credit. The dialogue between antiquity and commerce, agrarian virtue and moneyed corruption, is the core of Pocock's present account. It is against this background that Hume, Burke and Smith are understood. The reply of the moderns lay in their historicism, in showing that Antiquity had no prescriptive force because of the structural historical changes which constitute the commercial system, and which generate new systems of manners. Commerce civilizes, and the manners of the moneyed are more genteel than the barbarism of Sparta and Rome.

One aspect of the civility which preoccupied the eighteenth century was religion. Pocock touches on the notion that "politeness" was designed to displace the "prophetic", on Hume's "sociology of superstition", and on Tuckey's notion that Locke's dangerous civil philosophy was built upon indignation at religious persecution. But sometimes he slips into the now increasingly untenable assumption that Enlightenment classicism was necessarily a post-Christian secularism. That there is little religion in Pocock's book is untrue to the eighteenth century, but also untrue to Pocock's earlier work: for instance, his brilliant essays on Hobbes's eschatology and on Harrington's religion. The endeavours in Enlightenment Britain to construct a civil religion, a Stoic Christianity, in retort to "enthusiasm" and "priestcraft" is a large topic hardly yet addressed. Harrington was insistent that Moses was as great a lawgiver as Numa Pompilius, and that St Paul was a Roman citizen. We may expect something on these topics from Pocock himself, for his major current project is a book on Gibbon. And to explain Gibbon we need to know that the coffee-houses chattered not only about Cato and Cato, but also about Arrian and Athanasius.

An imposture revived

David Robinson

HARRY M. GEDULD (Editor)
Charlie Chaplin's Own Story
175pp. Bloomington: Indiana University
Press. \$20.
0253 1179X

Harry M. Geduld has in the past made valuable contributions to film scholarship. Now, however, he renders somewhat equivocal service in putting back into circulation after seventy years a flagrant autobiographical fake. *Charlie Chaplin's Own Story* was published in the autumn of 1916 by the American firm of Bobbs Merrill, but was rapidly withdrawn as a result of an injunction brought by Chaplin. Very few copies had been circulated, and the original edition is now a great rarity.

The book was the work of Roso Wilder Lane (1887-1968), who was a remarkable character in her own right. Her early experiences as the child of a family of struggling homesteaders in Dakota Territory are commemorated in the classic "Little House" books for children, written by her mother, Laura Ingalls Wilder, and currently enjoying new life through television. Subsequently Mrs Lane carved out a long career for herself as a journalist and writer; of the age of seventy-eight she went to Vietnam as a war correspondent.

Half a century earlier, in the spring of 1915,

she visited the Essanay Studios at Niles, California, to interview the new comedy star, Charlie Chaplin. Out of the interview Mrs Lane wrote a series of articles for the *San Francisco Bulletin*. Subsequently, Bobbs Merrill was persuaded to publish a greatly augmented version of Mrs Lane's manuscript in the form of a 258-page book.

The authentic material derived from the original interview was built up with lurid incidents, apparently inspired variously by novelettes and *Oliver Twist*. The story was updated to February 1916 and Chaplin's much-publicized contract with the Mutual Film Company; and though it was almost a year before that when Mrs Lane had met and spoken to him, the narrative (now seemingly cobbled together from news reports) continues in the first person and with detailed and circumstantial conversation. Mrs Lane seems to have been unconscious of any great mendacity in calling the book *Charlie Chaplin's Own Story*. Her other books, after all, included *Henry Ford's Own Story: How a farmer boy rose to the power that goes with money millions, yet never lost touch with humanity*.

Bobbs Merrill sent the Chaplin publicity department a telegram requesting photographs and casually mentioning that the book was in preparation. No one apparently took note of it, and Chaplin's first intimation of his "Own Story" was when he saw the published work in September 1916. He and his brother were outraged. Both in general and in particulars the

book was wildly misleading. Chaplin's father - a rather pathetic man who had separated from his unfaithful wife and died a victim of drink at the age of thirty-seven - was represented as a sadistic, drunken brute. John William Jackson, an eminently respectable music-hall manager who had given the infant Chaplin his first stage engagement with the Eight Lancashire Lads, was represented as considerably worse than Wackford Squeers. Other public people were as recklessly abused.

Chaplin instructed his lawyers to institute proceedings to prevent publication on the grounds that "it is not his autobiography, as the work is advertised, that it is purely a work of fiction, holding him to public ridicule and contempt, and that it reflects upon the memory of his late lamented father and is a libel on several men of excellent reputation". Bobbs Merrill, after a bold-hearted fight, wisely withdrew the book. Poor Mrs Lane remained baffled by Chaplin's opposition: she wrote to him that she still thought it "a corking book... whose popular appeal is greater than that of a book any other hack writer is apt to write...".

To be fair to Professor Geduld, he had probably already written his introduction before the full story of this curious book had come to light - in the course of my own biographical researches - in a forgotten file of papers in the Chaplin archives at Vevey. Even so, he seems culpably glib in the degree of trust he places in its authorship. Noting the extraordinary discrepancies between *Charlie Chaplin's Own*

Story and the authentic *My Autobiography* written half a century later, he merely concludes that Chaplin was an unreliable, untruthful and inconsistent autobiographer (which in my experience he was not, though he could be a selective one).

Surprisingly, considering his declared low opinion of Chaplin's veracity, his own biographical introduction is based on quite uncritical acceptance of the *Autobiography*. His annotations make little effort to distinguish fact from fancy: it would have been a matter of minimal research to right many of the most evident errors of fact and chronology. Instead, Geduld exhorts the value of viewing the autobiographies - spurious and authentic alike - as "pure fiction... the fantasies of a great artist - self-imaginings that were more meaningful to their creator than the bumrump reality".

Is there any value at all in the text? Anyone familiar with Chaplin interviews of the period (he interviewed often and well in his early Hollywood days) will recognize passages which are undoubtedly authentic and probably faithfully recorded from the original interview. Even some untruths may have come directly from Chaplin: at this time he was occasionally at pains to put reporters off any tracks which might lead them to disturb his wretched mad mother in her Peckham nursing home. It may be good in parts: but in the end, the areas between what is Chaplin's own story and what is pure fiction are so misty that we would probably do better to discount and discard it all.

In theory and in practice

Richard Taylor

S. M. EISENSTEIN
On the Composition of the Short Fiction
Scenario

Translated by Alan Y. Upchurch
61pp. Calcutta: Seagull Books. Rs25.
086132 0743

Eisenstein 2: A premature celebration of
Eisenstein's centenary
Edited by Jay Leyda
58pp. Calcutta: Seagull Books. Rs45.
086132 1006

Eisenstein 3: Eisenstein on Disney
Edited by Jay Leyda
52pp. Calcutta: Seagull Books. Rs45.
085647 1952

JAY LEYDA and ZINA VOYNOW

Eisenstein at Work
161pp. Methuen. £17.95.
0413534707

SERGEI EISENSTEIN
Immortal Memories: An autobiography
Translated by Herbert Marshall
292pp. Peter Owen. £20.
02706 06300

In 1911, in his "First Letter on Theatre", Leonid Andreyev predicted that "the miraculous Kinema" would one day produce a "Cinema Shakespeare" who would "deepen and broaden action to such an extent" that film would "become as expressive as speech". If any one person can lay claim to the mantle of "Cinema Shakespeare" it must be Sergei Eisenstein. But in a way he was to cinema even more than Shakespeare was to drama. He was not only a practitioner of the art but also its major theorist - its Brecht, its Stanislavsky and its Meyerhold.

Nobody has done more to bring Eisenstein's theoretical writings to the English-speaking audience than Jay Leyda. It was Leyda who was responsible in 1942 for the publication in English of *The Film Sense*, Eisenstein's first book, which appeared fourteen years before the first edition of his writings was published in the Soviet Union. Four of the five books reviewed here result from Leyda's labours. The most important is undoubtedly *Eisenstein at Work*, which, as Ted Perry points out in his highly enthusiastic introduction, "reveals the complicated interaction between the various components of Eisenstein's career, each part informing the others and coming together to create a whole". It does this very well, by making available to the English-speaking reader for the first time a considerable amount of material, both written and illustrated, from the

archives of the Eisenstein collections in Moscow and New York. It brings together both finished films like *October* and unfinished projects like *Fergannah Canal*; it encompasses both cinema and theatre work, from the Proletkult version of Ostrovsky's *Enough Simplicity for Every Wise Man* in 1923 to Eisenstein's production of *Die Walküre* in 1940 and it includes a partial translation of at least one important theoretical work, "The Montage of Film Attractions", 1924. All this is richly illustrated with an extraordinary array of photographs and Eisenstein's own sketches and drawings and effectively conveys the breadth of his interests and talents - only his sense of humour is missing.

The Calcutta series aims to present Eisenstein's less-known writings and has now reached its third volume. The first volume contained Eisenstein's lecture to Soviet filmmakers after the German attack in June 1941; in it he outlined proposals for the "Fighting Film Album" series which played such a central part in Soviet cinema's contribution to the Great Patriotic War effort. The second volume is principally composed of correspondence, the most valuable letters being those exchanged at the time of Eisenstein's departure from Proletkult in 1925, but it is difficult to see why some of the other documents have been chosen for inclusion. More abundant explanatory and contextual footnotes would have been appreciated. This weakness has been remedied in Volume Three, which is by far the most interesting of the series. Fragmentary though the writings contained in it are, the reader will be surprised by Eisenstein's admiration of Disney and his fascination with *Bambi*; the later pieces throw interesting light on Eisenstein's views (which he was to demonstrate in *Ivan the Terrible*) on the use of colour and sound.

Those who have been eagerly awaiting an English translation of Eisenstein's memoirs will be bitterly disappointed by Herbert Marshall's version of *Immortal Memories*. The text (with some unexplained alterations) and most of the notes are taken with virtually no acknowledgment from the first volume of the six-volume *Izbrannye proizvedeniya*, published in Moscow in 1964. Marshall in fact takes specific credit for a "Chronology of Eisenstein's Life and Works" that derives from the same source. The soundness of the original Soviet scholarship used by Marshall contrasts sharply with the standard of the sections for which he alone is responsible. In a manner familiar from his *Crippled Creative Biographies*, he uses these as a vehicle to set a old scores rather than to clarify the main body of the text.

In search of a character

Benedict Nightingale

FOSTER HIRSCH
A Method to Their Madness: The history of the
Actors Studio
367pp. Norton. £14.95
0393 017834

Some three years ago Thomas Babe's *Buried Inside Extra*, about the night-life of a newspaper inside whose premises someone had inconsiderately planted an atom bomb, made a brief appearance at the Royal Court. It was a pretty inept piece, but its American cast played it capably enough, and in one case much more than capably. Into the caricature newsroom teetered Sandy Dennis, the wife of the hard-bitten but lovable editor; and, once there, she proceeded to give what was supposed to be a cameo performance but was actually a bravura display of clenchings of the hands, blinkings of the eyes, judderings and flutterings of the body, big stricken smiles, tiny twists of the mouth, and general vocal neurosis. It was a brilliant piece of acting, and a deplorable one, since it was different in intensity and nuance from what the script demanded and the rest of the company was providing. It shimmered, but it shimmered at the expense of the production as a whole. It contrived simultaneously to show the Method at its best and its worst.

That is a judgment with which Foster Hirsch would surely concur. He has interviewed many of those who, with Miss Dennis, have learned their methods and their Method at the Actors Studio in New York. He has even been allowed to enter its sanctum on West 44th Street and watch some of its rituals. Yet his history of the place is far from conventionally defamatory, and his assessment of its accomplishments is properly sceptical. He knows that the Actors Studio is partly responsible for the candour and gumption for which British actors admire their American counterparts; he also recognizes that it helps explain why the Americans still envy the British for their discipline, discrimination and skill with words.

The book begins with a painstaking account of Stanislavsky's philosophy and practice at the Moscow Arts Theatre. Then Hirsch's prose sharpens and quickens, and he's off to America, where assorted disciples are to be found propagating the great director's ideals with varying degrees of accuracy. The Russian Bolshevik inspires Harold Clurman and Lee Strasberg, they found the Group Theatre; and it becomes known, not only for its social commitment, but for the realism of its productions, the subtlety and (sometimes) depth its performers bring to their roles. However, this doesn't occur without disagreements, the most important of which may be, precisely dated, to August 7, 1934.

That was when Stella Adler, Clurman's wife and a key Group member, returned from Europe and reported on her encounters with the ageing Stanislavsky, a maestro always more flexible than his American followers and now demonstrably so. He had (she said) been especially critical of "effective memory", the technique by which performers recall strongly emotional moments in their own lives in order to whip themselves into the right dramatic mood; and that was particularly bad news for Strasberg, who had enshrined it as an essential component of his training system, or Method. In Hirsch's version of this famous confrontation, he is belittled "Stanislavsky doesn't know, I know", making a lasting enemy of Adler and, indeed, causing splits in the American theatre which survive to this day.

The reason Strasberg's dogmatism mattered was, of course, the Actors Studio. When Ella Kazan and other Group alumni were creating it in 1947, they deliberately excluded him; but he was invited to teach there two years later, became artistic director in 1952, and ran it more or less autocratically until his death in 1982. His character clearly fascinates Hirsch, as well it might; since in the course of dozens of interviews he heard him described as "Jesus, Buddha, Moses, Oedipus, Rasputin, God, the Pope, Pontius Pilate, Hitler, Jim Jones, Job, the rabbi, a saint, a fakir, a badger, a Jewish pope, the Great Sphinx, a talmudic scholar, a Hasidic scholar" - and, by Strasberg's own deeply disaffected son, "an infantile man, surrounded by a bunch of kids fighting for power". The tilt and tenor of the evidence itself are, however, pretty negative, especially on the personal side. Strasberg was rude, cowardly in a crisis, and abjectly impressed by the stars and celebrities whose glitter the Studio was in business to resist.

Professionally, the evidence is more mixed. Marlon Brando, the most famous Method actor of all, has always denied more than a glancing debt to the Studio. Indeed, his best-known creation, Stanley Kowalski in Tennessee Williams's *A Streetcar Named Desire*, was achieved before it became fully operational. On the other hand, those who came to hone their skills either there or at its Hollywood offshoot have included Paul Newman, Dustin Hoffman, Al Pacino, Robert de Niro, Jack Nicholson, Shelley Winters, Geraldine Page, Anne Bancroft and, in her Arthur Miller period, Marilyn Monroe. As this list suggests, the Studio may have accomplished more for the cinema than for its primary love, the theatre. The dark and pregnant look, the tiny but significant gesture, and other such signs and symptoms of Method training, count for more when the camera is coolly and closely recording them than when they're seen across the acres of an auditorium.

The Studio is less influential now than it was ten or twenty years ago, but it still soldiers on, offering a lifetime of creative refreshment to any professional who passes its taxing audition. Hirsch witnessed several working sessions, ranging from the ordinarily oreane to the bizarre, and culminating in a very long, very slow extract from *Private Lives* in which one principal was modelling herself on a giraffe and the other trying to give an impression of Coney Island pier "with lights". Sometimes the idea is to uncover and explore hidden aspects of the self, sometimes to evolve new and significant body-language, sometimes simply to relax, sometimes oil or none of these aims. Even the most preposterous happenings have the excuse of being exercises in the lab, not performances.

Nevertheless, Hirsch worries, along with a growing number of Americans. The method encourages its practitioners, not so much to project themselves emotionally and physically into a character's predicament as to preoccupy themselves with those aspects of a character and his predicament with which they can literally identify. When they actually get on stage, then, they're apt to end up playing themselves rather than their roles, often with little regard for fiction and other supposedly "external" matters. "Style" is a rude word in the Method vocabulary, something for which the brittle and superficial British manage to get themselves overpaid.

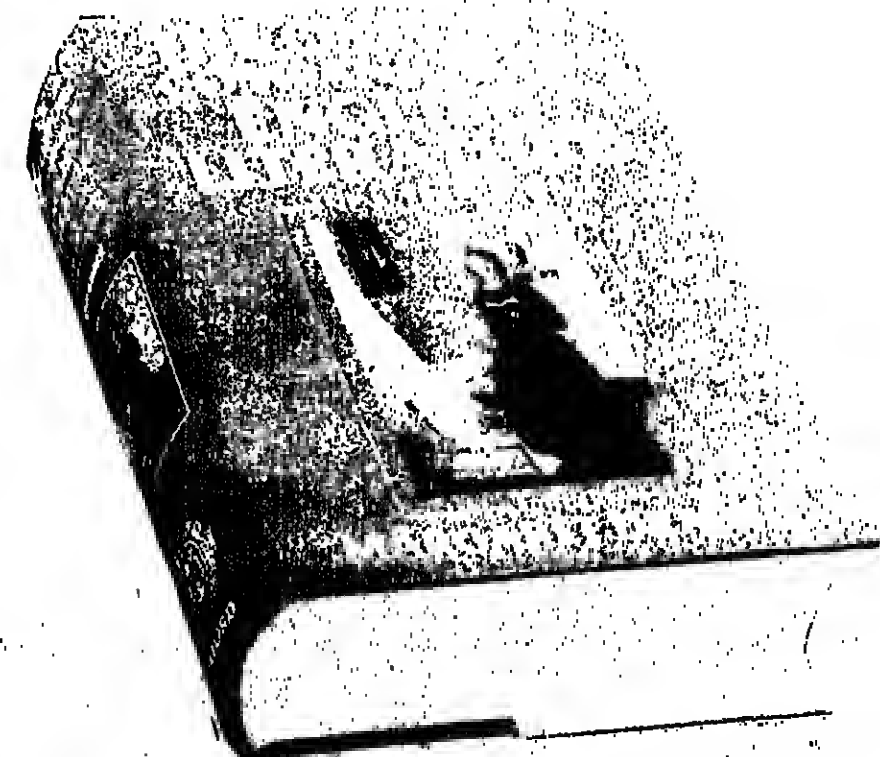
"The analytical school of acting" was the summing-up of Robert Lewis in the autobiography he published in 1984, *Slings and Arrows*; and his insult merits attention, since he founded the Studio with Kazan and went on to teach at one of those university conservatories which (it's widely agreed) have been creating a new, more complete type of performer, the Yale School of Drama. Hirsch's conclusions are more moderate, but perhaps more just. Yes, Method actors sometimes fail to make a necessary leap between experiencing personal emotion and embodying it in fictional character. Yes, some of them "instead of using their imaginations to encompass a play's reality, disfigure the play so as not to dislodge their own". But the Studio continues to "sharpen actors' abilities to perform the kind of realistic material they are most likely to be hired for"; its "exploration of psychological realism is of perennial value"; and, at best, it "gives acting a truth, an honesty, a sense of a character's inner life, all radiating from the actor's genuinely personal core".

On Making Pictures: The Philter, screenplays (215pp. Ohio State University Press. \$22. Paperback, \$10.95. 0 8142 0378 7) Joanne Klein examines Pinter's screenplays of other writers' novels: *The Servant*, *The Pumpkin Eater*, *The Quiller Memorandum*, *Accident*, *The Go-Between*, *The Last Tycoon*, *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, and *The Priest*. By concentrating on Pinter's versions of novels, she intends to limit her study to "evaluation of narrative discourse peculiar to the novel and film media".

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TLS April 26 1985



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At the turn of the era

Geza Vermes

M. DE JONGHE (Editor)
Outside the Old Testament
263pp. Cambridge University Press. £32.50
(paperback, £11.95).
0521242495

JAMES H. CHARLESWORTH (Editor)
The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha
Volume Two: Expansions of the "Old
Testament" and legends, Wisdom and
philosophical literature, Prayers, Psalms and
odes, Fragments of lost Judeo-Hellenistic
works
1,006pp. Darton, Longman and Todd. £30.
023516278

JAMES HAMILTON CHARLESWORTH
The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha and the
New Testament: Preliminary for the study of
Christian origins
213pp. Cambridge University Press. £19.50.
0521301904

MICHAEL E. STONE (Editor)
Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period
Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran
scribal writings, Philo, Josephus
697pp. Assen: Van Gorcum. Hfl 99.50.
9023220366

For the last three decades in the study of ancient Jewish literature, the so-called inter-testamental period, extending from the second century BC to the second century AD, has constituted probably the liveliest sector. The extraordinary manuscript discoveries in the region of Qumran between 1947 and 1956 brought this period into the focus of scholarly and lay interest, and in the wake of the Dead Sea Scrolls the previously rather neglected writings known as the Apocrypha and the Pseudepigrapha moved to the front line of academic concern. *Outside the Old Testament*, edited by M. de Jonghe, is one of the latest attempts to render these documents easily accessible to a wider public. It is part of the Cambridge Commentaries on Writings of the Jewish and Christian World series, which, like its sister collection, the Cambridge Bible Commentaries, serves to convey "the results of modern scholarship to the general reader".

Professor de Jonghe has entrusted twelve representative pseudographic works to specialists to supply introductions and suitable extracts of annotated translation. The choice both of the titles and of the contributors has been excellent. The collection includes some rewritten Bible stories: Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, the Book of Jubilees, Joseph and Aseneth, and the Chron-

icle of Jeremiah, interpreted respectively by D. J. Harrington, J. C. VanderKam, C. Burchard and J. Riaud. Apocalyptic literature is represented by the First Book of Enoch and the Second, or Syriac, Book of Baruch (M. A. Knibb and A. F. J. Klijn). Excerpts from the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, the Testament of Abraham, the Testament (or Assumption) of Moses and the Testament of Job come from H. W. Hollander, E. P. Sanders, J. J. Collins and R. P. Spittler, and religious poetry, the Psalms of Solomon, from the editor himself.

As may be expected of a first introduction to the Pseudepigrapha, the views expressed in it are largely uncontroversial. Nevertheless, it also advances several less universally held theses. Thus Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum* is dated to the pre-70 period, and not, as is more common, to the end of the first century AD. Conversely, the Parables of Enoch are placed in the last decades of that century, and not in the age of the Second Temple. I sympathize with both these views, but disagree with a third, proposed by Hollander, concerning the Christian character of the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs, a theory whose most eloquent champion is de Jonghe himself. *Outside the Old Testament* may be safely prescribed to undergraduates in theology and religious studies and warmly recommended to the general reader with biblical interests.

M. de Jonghe's collection is intended as a first step in initiation into post-biblical Jewish literature. True familiarity can, however, only be attained through a perusal of all the available texts and not merely of selected excerpts. With the publication of the second and final volume of *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (OTP for short), edited by James H. Charlesworth, a new way has been opened towards achieving this aim. (As a matter of fact, half of the twelve documents contained in *Outside the Old Testament* have been borrowed from OTP.) Volume Two adds to the twenty-five apocalypses and testaments of OTP I a further twenty-seven titles, and fragments of thirteen Jewish-Hellenistic compositions.

In reviewing Volume One (TLS, May 18, 1984), I complained of a more than predictable unevenness in the quality of a collection of edited translations by many different collaborators and of illogicality and arbitrariness in the choice of criteria to define the concept Pseudepigrapha. Despite the lip-service paid to provenance (the writings must be Jewish) and chronology (they are supposed to belong to the inter-Testamental period), at least one-third of the books included were Christian in their redactions, with highly problematic Jewish

antecedents, and dated, not to the Graeco-Roman, but to the Byzantine epoch. In other words, Volume One of OTP was a hotchpotch of documents, Jewish, Christian and Gnostic, ancient and medieval. It is agreeable to reassure readers that flaws which were glaring in OTP I are less obvious in OTP 2. The improvement, although unplanned, and resulting largely from the hazard of thematic arrangement, is nevertheless most welcome and redounds to some extent this major enterprise. Pseudo-Philo (Harrington), Jubilees (O. S. Wintermute), the Martyrdom of Isaiah (Knibb), Joseph and Aseneth (C. Burchard) and the Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides (P. W. van der Horst) may be singled out as particularly praiseworthy. Attention should be drawn also to the translation (by A. Pieterma and B. T. Lutz) of the recently published Greek papyrus fragments of the Book of James and James, the two legendary Egyptian magicians who are said to have competed with Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh. The supplement of Judeo-Hellenistic books, or rather of what remains of them thanks to quotations in the *Preparatio evangelica* of the fourth-century church historian Eusebius, constitutes also a valuable asset in OTP 2. Though they scarcely rate as Pseudepigrapha in the strict sense — they bear the names of their real authors, Eupolemus, Artapanus, Ezechiel the Dramatist, etc. — these works, like 3 Enoch (the cuckoo in the OTP I nest), rank among the best pearls of the corpus. The doubtful inclusions, late compositions of probably Christian origin — such as the Ascension (as distinct from the Martyrdom) of Isaiah, the Ladder of Jacob, the History of the Rechabites, the History of Joseph — are also fewer than those in Volume One. The consultation of both tomes is greatly facilitated by a substantial index.

In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha and the New Testament*, Professor Charlesworth concludes twelve years of editorial work devoted to OTP with reflections on the significance of his corpus for students of the beginnings of Christianity. Three main chapters are enlarged from lectures delivered in 1983. Charlesworth has appended a glossary of foreign and technical terms — some (such as *inter alio* = "among other things") superfluous, others decidedly odd, for example, that *deus ex machina* "describes the attitude or idea that God must and does respond as a machine to human behaviour". The three main sections dispense a considerable amount of information on the history of Pseudepigrapha research from the early eighteenth century to the present time, with special stress on the need to reinterpret all the texts in the light of the greatly increased manuscript evidence available

today. The author outlines also the complex problems of dating, and explains the importance of the chronological factor when evaluating the utility of these works for New Testament research. There is a striking difference between the positions adopted by Charlesworth *qua* editor and *qua* interpreter. Wearing the first hat, he welcomes, among his Pseudepigrapha, as has been noted earlier, Jewish and non-Jewish compositions covering a millennium starting from 200 BC. As a historical exegete, by contrast, he seems to follow the judgment of the critics of his editorial principles and limits the literature deemed relevant to "early Judaism" and New Testament study, to writings from "basically 200 B.C.E. to 200 C.E." Moreover, he explicitly declares — and his estimate is rather conservative — that no less than thirteen, and possibly sixteen, of the contents of OTP are "far too late for New Testament research". In his final chapter, Charlesworth collects many convincing, and some debatable, examples from the Pseudepigrapha to assist the interpreter of the New Testament. Students may find the select bibliography compiled by Professor Charlesworth of particular value. It is a pity that the publishers have not seen to it that the word Pseudepigrapha is recognized and used as a plural noun. The verb accompanying it here is mostly in the singular, although the term *pseudepigraphon* is also encountered. Hebrew transliterations and German citations could have done with some editorial polish. For a small book selling at nearly £20, this is not too much to ask.

Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period, edited by Michael E. Stone, is a literary historical survey in the mammoth ecumenical venture entitled *Compendia Rerum Iudaeicarum ad Novum Testamentum*, entrusted by a Dutch foundation to an international team of Jewish and Christian scholars. The material is set out according to literary classes: stories of biblical and early post-biblical times and the rewritten Bible (G. W. E. Nickelsburg); historiography (H. W. Attridge); Wisdom literature (M. Gilbert); testamentary literature and Sibylline oracles (Collins); apocalypses (Stone); psalms, hymns and prayers (D. Flusser); and letters (P. S. Alexander). The three exceptions to this arrangement by subject-matter are Josephus (also Attridge), Philo (P. Borgen) and the Dead Sea sectarian writings (D. Dimant), each of which is allotted a separate chapter. The volume represents a very competent, unpretentious, medium-level introduction to the literary world of Judaism around the beginning of the Christian era. Well-chosen annotated bibliographies follow each chapter and point the way towards advanced study and research.

never existed). These writers — poets, not chroniclers — may well inspire innovative reflections; but their sequences were not to be put to the touchstone of unavailable archives. And Edwards, generous with his own symbolism, shrugs off the Virgin Birth. In spite of paradox and ridicule our evangelists insisted on it. Can one reverse one's "sources" by halves?

Methodology apart, one can gain from this novel work. The paralytic of John 5:9 and 14 is said to have become a "man" with his "erect posture". Leviticus 26:13 proves, in Edwards's favour, that the miracle was meaningful; and, against Edwards, that the Old Testament does illuminate our text. Scholars' techniques, more prosaic but more rigorous and certainly more logical than Edwards's, have not come forward with this. The myth of the Exodus was about the (still incomplete) "maturation" of man.

Published this week is *One God . . . Three Gods?* by Christopher Martin (121pp. Woking: Churchman. Paperback, £4.95. 1 85093 038 4), a book based on the production of a series of six documentary programmes to be shown on ITV later this year, filmed in and around Jerusalem and also in Cairo. It has a foreword by Donald Coggan, who welcomes its aim "to explore where the three faiths — Judaism, Christianity and Islam — overlap, particularly though: the experiences of those who have been touched by more than one of them".

Anecdotes and facetiae

Craig Brown

ALICE THOMAS ELLIS
Home Life
152pp. Duckworth. £8.95.
015620932

At the beginning of last year, the novelist Alice Thomas Ellis began writing a weekly column, "Home Life", for the *Spectator*, joining fellow autobiographers Taki (Acerbic Playboy) and Jeffrey Bernard (University of Life) in their respective columns, "High Life" and "Low Life". Her first year's worth of articles has been collected into this short book.

Her persona, even in the most recent articles, appears no more simplified than it would be if, say, one met her for the first time at a party. The book carries this cataloguing classification: "Family — Great Britain — Anecdotes, facetiae, satire, etc.", and this, to a large extent, is what it is. She is good at doing effortlessly what other women journalists do laboriously — animating the humdrum, turning social disaster into humorous anecdote. She makes a rather charming virtue out of not bothering too much. The book arranges the articles according to the four seasons, and only such footling headings could encompass these scatty, whimsical musings. Her main subjects are clothes, food, animals, children, domestic appliances and the weather. "Whose is the jacket and set of keys in the boiler room, and how is he managing without them?" is her sort of line, combining recognizable situations with an air of slight mystery, but her articles, written in a style best termed Formal Slapdash, are almost professionally off-the-shelf.

Edno Healey has written a very interesting book on Mary Livingstone, Jenny Marx and Emma Darwin, but a surprisingly old-fashioned one, by reason of its totally unfemin-

ine approach. A reader these days may expect in a book about the wives of great men — especially of the Victorian great (the type case is Jane Welsh Carlyle) — to find them cast as victims of male exploitation; and the subject of *Wives of Fame* could easily be so cast, Mrs Livingstone especially. But Mrs Healey (herself married to a famous husband) is uninterested in such an approach: she seems to accept her subjects' sacrifice of any thought of self-fulfilment, in submission to the creative daemons which drove their husbands on, as readily as they did themselves. The only question she raises at the end of the book is whether, given a second chance, they would have married the same husbands; and she raises that only to reject it. Despite adopting so resolutely unfashionable a scheme of values, the author writes with obvious integrity, and her portraits are sympathetic and convincing.

A sense of calling

A. L. Le Quesne

EDNA HEALEY
Wives of Fame
210pp. Sidgwick and Jackson. £12.95.
0283 985526

Edno Healey has written a very interesting book on Mary Livingstone, Jenny Marx and Emma Darwin, but a surprisingly old-fashioned one, by reason of its totally unfemin-

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John Bayley is Thomas Warton Professor of English at the University of Oxford. His *Selected Essays* were published in 1984.
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David S. Bell is a lecturer in Politics at the University of Leeds.
James H. Billington is Director of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, DC. He is the author of *The Icon and the Axe: An Interpretive History of Russian Culture*, 1980.
Vernon Bogdanor is a Fellow of Brasenose College, Oxford, and author of *Multi-Party Politics and the Constitution*, 1983. He is the editor of *Representatives of the People: Parliamentarians and constituents in Western democracies*, which will be reviewed in a forthcoming issue of the TLS.
Hugh Brown's *History of the United States of America*, 1985, will be reviewed in paperback later this year.
Craig Brown's *The Morsh Marlowe Letters* was published in 1984.
Geoff Brown writes on film for *The Times*. His books include *Laundery and Giffitt*, 1977, and *Walter Pford*, 1977.
James Campbell's most recent book is *Gate Fever: Voices from a prison*.
David Cannadine is the author of *Lords and Landlords: The aristocracy and the towns 1774-1967*, 1980.
Patricia Craig is working on a study of Northern Irish poetry and fiction.
J. Duncan M. Derrett is the author of *The Making of Mark: The Scriptural bases of the earliest gospel*, 1985.
Ronald Dove is the author of *British Factory—Japanese Factory*, 1973, and *Shinohara: A portrait of a Japanese village*, 1979.
D. J. Enright's collection of essays *A Maula for Sentences* was published in 1983. He is the editor of *Fair Play Speech: The uses of euphemism*, 1985.
Mark Grouard's most recent book is *Cities and People*, 1985.
Mark Goldie is a Fellow of Churchill College, Cambridge. His *The Tory Ideology: Politics, religion and ideas in Restoration England* will be published shortly.
André Gomme is co-author of *Architecture of Glasgow*, 1968 and of *Bristol: An architectural history*, 1980.
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James Joll is Emeritus Professor of International History at the University of London. His books include *Intellectuals in Politics*, 1960, and *Gramsci*, 1977.
Marc Jordan is the author of *Edmond Bouchardon*, which was published last year.
Kenneth Kitchen is Reader in Egyptology and Co-director of the University of Liverpool and the author of *Pharaoh's Triumph: The life and times of Ramesses II, King of Egypt*, 1983.
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A. L. Le Quesne's *Carlyle* was published in the Past Masters series in 1983.
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Donald B. Cruise O'Brien teaches at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.
Karel O'Connor's editions of Jack London's *Crabs of the Shark* and Robert Louis Stevenson's *In the South Seas* were published earlier this year.
David Robinson is the Film Critic of *The Times* and author of *Chaplin: His life and art*, 1983.
Stephen Roman edits the bi-lingual review *TwoFold*.
Alan Ryan is a Fellow of New College, Oxford. His *Property and Political Theory* was published in 1984.
John Ure is British Ambassador to Brazil. His books include *The Trail of Tamerlane*, 1980, and *The Quest for Captain Morgan*, 1983.
Geza Vermes is Reader in Jewish Studies and Fellow of Wolfson College, Oxford. His books include *Jesus the Jew*, 1973, and *Jesus and the World of Judaism*, 1983.
H. R. Woudhuysen is a lecturer in English at University College London. He is working on an edition of *Love's Labour's Lost* for the New Arden series.

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